

# DBH Cultural Event Newsletter

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## December is Universal Human Rights Month



**DECEMBER 2008**

<http://www.ccp.edu/eeoaa/2008Cal/decmain.htm>  
<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/2008.htm>  
<http://www.wheeloftheyear.com/2008/1208.htm>  
<http://www.bigdates.com/holidays/default.asp?y=2009>  
<http://www.multifaiths.com/religions.aspx?RelId=9&FId=262>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_holidays\\_by\\_country](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_holidays_by_country)  
<http://www.holidaysmart.com/2008/year2008.htm>  
<http://hinduism.about.com/library/weekly/extra/bl-alm.htm>  
<http://www3.kumc.edu/diversity/december.html>  
[http://www.vpcalendar.net/Holiday\\_Dates/2005\\_2010.html](http://www.vpcalendar.net/Holiday_Dates/2005_2010.html)  
<http://en.wikipedia.org>  
<http://www.web-holidays.com/calendar/12/>  
<http://www.partyguideonline.com/months/december/dec01.html>  
<http://www.eskimo.com/~recall/bleed/1229.htm>  
<http://www.festivalsinindia.net/>  
<http://www.southtravels.com/africa/egypt/events.html>  
<http://www.brownielocks.com/b3bcalendar.html?200812>  
<http://www.dom.com/about/education/culture/dec.jsp>  
<http://www.panchangam.com/fest.htm>  
<http://www.rudraksha-ratna.com/festivals.html>

**Universal Human Rights Month.** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the UN in 1948 as a response to the Nazi holocaust & to set a standard by which the human rights activities of all nations, rich & poor alike, are to be measured. Some of the rights are: No one shall be subjected to cruel and inhuman punishment; being entitled to a fair & public hearing by an impartial tribunal; the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, & effects"; the right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion; the right to a standard of living to include food, clothing, housing & medical care & necessary social services; the right to Education; the right to participate in the cultural life of the community & not being arbitrarily deprived of his property; a speedy juried trial & right to legal counsel. For a complete listing of rights, go to:  
<http://www.hr95.org/Udhr.html>

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>

### December 1

**Minoru Yamasaki (1912–1986): Japanese American.** Architect. A highly successful designer of public buildings, he is best known for his designs for the Wayne State University campus in Detroit & the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City.

**Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965: United States.** This law substantially revised the system of immigration quotas that had been in effect since 1924. The former system, which had set specific ceilings on the number of immigrants who could enter the U.S. from a particular country, was replaced by limits of 170,000 for immigrants from outside the Western (with a maximum of 20,000 for any one country) & of 120,000 for the Western Hemisphere, with no limitations on any one country. U.S. citizens & political refugees were exempted from the quotas. The act greatly expanded immigration opportunities for non-Europeans.

**Restauração da Independência (Independence Day): Portugal.** This commemorates the restoration of Portugal's independence in 1640 after a 60-year period of union with Spain.

**Rosa Parks Day: African American.** On this day in 1955 Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Montgomery, Alabama, seamstress & member of the local chapter of the NAACP, refused to surrender her seat to a white man, defying the established practice of racial segregation in public transportation. After her arrest, the Blacks of the city organized to boycott the buses, causing the bus company's profits to drop by 65 percent. The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. 1st came to national prominence as a leader of the boycott. After a Supreme Court decision in November 1956, the boycott was ended & integrated service began.

<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/par0bio-1>

**Ziua națională or Ziua unirii (National Holiday or Union Day): Romania.** Celebrating the union of Transylvania with the Kingdom of Romania.

**Suijin-Matsuri/Water Kami Festival: Shinto.** Rite honoring the Kami of Water.

**World AIDS Day.** Also known as United Nations World AIDS Day. This has been declared by the World Health Organization as a time to increase education & awareness of AIDS. <http://www.avert.org/worldaid.htm>  
<http://www.unaids.org/en/>

### December 2


**Ruth Hanna McCormick Simms,** became the 1<sup>st</sup> woman named as a Presidential campaign manager on this date in 1939 (for candidate Thomas E. Dewey).


**Independence Day: Laos.** Public holiday. The communist Pathet Lao, a nationalist political movement, overthrew the royalist government of Laos, forcing King Savang Vatthana to abdicate on December 2, 1975. After taking control of the country, they renamed it the *Lao People's Democratic Republic*.

 **International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: UN.**  
<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/slavery/>

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### December 3

 **Joseph Conrad (born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski) (1857–1924): Polish British.** Writer. After spending his youth as a merchant seaman on French & British ships, Conrad settled in England & began a career as a novelist & short story writer. His works, many of them set on the high seas, are absorbing stories that raise profound questions about the nature of fate & individual responsibility.


 **International Day of Disabled Persons: UN.**  
<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=22&pid=109>


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### December 4

 **First national college fraternity for African-Americans, Alpha Phi Alpha, was started on this date in 1905 at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.**


 **St. Barbara's Day: Germany.**  
<http://www.germanculture.com.ua/library/weekly/aa120100d.htm>


 **Day for meditation: Buddhist.** On Tantric Bodhisattva Deities Manjusri & Prajna-Paramita, consciousness & empowerment of Wisdom. Prajna-Paramita is considered Mother of All Buddhas.

 **Feast of Orisha Shango: Yoruba/Santeria.** Defender Against Evil.


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### December 5

 **Josef Pilsudski (1867–1935): Polish.** Political & military leader. Born to a Polish family when the territory of historic Poland was divided & ruled by Germany, Austria-Hungary, & Russia, Pilsudski devoted his energies to the cause of restoring his nation's independence, beginning as a youthful revolutionary & evolving into a statesman who became the chief of state when Poland was reestablished as a nation in 1918. He served until 1922, leading Polish forces in their successful war against Russia in 1919–1920. He seized power again in 1926 & dominated the government until his death.

 **Phillis Wheatley (1753–1784): African American.** Poet. This is the anniversary of the death of the 1st distinguished African American poet, who was brought to America as a slave at about 8 years of age. Educated in Latin & English by her master & mistress, Wheatley became famous for her learned & elegant poetry. She was the 1<sup>st</sup> African American, the 1<sup>st</sup> slave, & the 3<sup>rd</sup> woman to publish a book of poems.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2p12.html>

 **Discovery Day: Haiti.** This day commemorates the discovery by Christopher Columbus of Haiti in 1492.

 **National Day (King's Birthday): Thailand.** On this holiday the people of Thailand renew their commitment to democracy while celebrating the birthday of the king with religious ceremonies in the temples.

 **Saint Nicholas Day: Netherlands.** On this day Saint Nicholas, "Sinterklaas," arrives in Holland. This begins

the Christmas season in the Netherlands. On this day Saint Nicholas, "Sinterklaas," arrives. Cities have parades where he comes riding on a white horse or in a barge or even on a motorcycle wearing a bishop's hat & a red cape. That evening, adults have parties & exchange gifts, while children set out shoes filled with carrots & hay for Saint Nicholas' horse. In the morning, they find the shoes filled with gifts.

This day, called *samiclaus* in Swiss German, is also important in Switzerland, where good children get chocolate as well as nuts & fruit in their shoes.



#### FOOD AND DRINK:


Christmas cookies are an important tradition in Holland, appearing at all parties. *Speculaas* are spice-flavored cookies, often shaped like windmills. *Spritz* are sugar cookies. Doughnuts are popular, too, as are chestnuts, served hot with salt.

<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=92>


 **International Volunteer Day for Economic & Social Development: UN.** <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/>


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### December 6


 **Ira Gershwin (1896–1983): Jewish American.**


Lyricist & playwright. Ira Gershwin collaborated with his brother, the composer George Gershwin, to write many of the classics of American popular song, most of them scores of musical comedies for the stage & movies. The Gershwins' shows include *Funny Face*, *Lady Be Good*, & the Black "folk opera" *Porgy and Bess*.

 **9th Annual Little Italy Holiday Tree Lighting: San Diego, CA.** Come one, come all & join us kick off the holiday season. The Little Italy Association is proud to present its 9th Annual Little Italy Holiday Tree Lighting. The event will be held on the corner of India & Date Streets from 5:30p.m. -7:00p.m. So bring the family, friends & pets to share in the holiday cheer.

 **National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women: Canada.** The anniversary of the 1989 École Polytechnique Massacre. It is often marked by vigils, discussions & other reflections on violence against women. Canadian flags on all federal buildings, including the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, are flown at half-mast. In addition, Canadians are encouraged to observe a minute of silence & to wear a white ribbon (or a purple ribbon) as a commitment to end violence against women.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89cole\\_Polytechnique\\_Massacre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89cole_Polytechnique_Massacre)

 **13th Amendment** ratified on this date in 1855 abolishing slavery in the United States.

 **Día de la Constitución (Constitution Day): Spain.** After the death of Spain's dictator, Francisco Franco, in 1975, Spain became a democracy & on this day in 1978 a new constitution was adopted by referendum.

🌐 **Itsenäisyyspäivä (Independence Day): Finland.** This day celebrates Finland's gaining of independence from Russia in 1917.

🌐 **Independence of Quito: Ecuador.** Public holiday. This is the annual festival celebrating the founding of Quito on December 6, 1534 by Spanish conquistador, Sebastián de Benalcázar. The celebration, which includes concerts, street dances, bullfights, & fireworks, lasts for an entire week

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## December 7

🌐 **Willa Cather (1873-1947): American.** Editor, manager of *McClure's*, author (*My Antonia*, *Oh Pioneers!*), she won the 1923 Pulitzer Prize for *One of Ours*.

[www.gustavus.edu/oncampus/academics/english/cather/](http://www.gustavus.edu/oncampus/academics/english/cather/)

🌐 **Pearl Harbor Day: United States.**

<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/wwii-pac/pearlhbr/pearlhbr.htm>

<http://my.execpc.com/~dschaaf/mainmenu.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack\\_on\\_Pearl\\_Harbor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor)

🌐 **The Hajj (hâj) (12/7-12/11): Islam.** The hajj is the annual pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. All Muslims who are able are required to make the pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime. The hajj, one of the Five Pillars of Islam, begins on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the last month of the Islamic lunar year. The hajj is a time for reflection & celebration, when more than 2 million Muslims from around the world gather together to celebrate their faith. At Mecca, the pilgrims perform many rituals, including walking 7 times around the sacred shrine of Kaaba. The culmination of the hajj is the 3-day festival of Eid al-Adha (The Feast of Sacrifice), the most important feast of the Muslim calendar.

<http://www.islam.com/hajj/hajj.htm>

<http://www.ummah.net/hajj/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hajj>

<http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/hajj/>

🌐 **International Civil Aviation Day: UN.**

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## December 8

🌐 **Diego Rivera (1886–1957): Mexican.** Painter. With David Siqueiros & José Clemente Orozco, Rivera led the mural painting movement that flourished in newly independent Mexico. His vision of an art created for the people found its most memorable expression in monumental wall paintings depicting the ideals of the Mexican revolution & his own vision of the nobility of the common people.

<http://www.diegorivera.com/index.php>

🌐 **Sammy Davis, Jr. (1925-1990): African-American.** Singer, dancer, impressionist, actor on stage, film, clubs, TV. <http://www.sammydavis-jr.com/>

🌐 **Mother's Day: Panama.** Public holiday.



🌐 **Bodhi Day (Buddha's Enlightenment): Buddhist.** Among Mahāyāna Buddhists, this holiday celebrates Buddha's attaining understanding of the truth of existence, freeing himself from all human suffering, & finding perfect happiness. The date is based on the Japanese Buddhist calendar.

<http://www.budtempchi.org/bodhiwriteup.html>

🌐 **Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Austria-Mariä Empfängnis, Chile & Spain & Venezuela-Inmaculada Concepción, Italy-Immacolata Concezione, Portugal-Imaculada Conceição, Switzerland-Mariä Empfängnis): Roman Catholic.** This celebrates the Roman Catholic belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was conceived free from original sin.

🌐 **Hari Raya Haji: Singapore.**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holidays\\_in\\_Singapore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holidays_in_Singapore)

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## December 9

🌐 **Battle of Ayacucho: Peru.** This date commemorates the fulfillment of Peru's quest for independence through the final defeat of Spanish forces by Antonio José de Sucre in 1824.

🌐 **Independence Day: Tanzania.** On this date in 1961, the East African nation Tanganyika gained independence from Great Britain. In 1964, Tanganyika united with several islands in the Indian Ocean, including Zanzibar & Pemba, to form the United Republic of Tanzania.

🌐 **Eid ul-Adha (The Feast of Sacrifice) (12/9-12/11): Islam.** This 3-day festival comes at the culmination of the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. All Muslims who can are required to make this pilgrimage once in their lifetime. Mecca & Medina, both in Saudi Arabia, are Islam's 2 holiest sites. This religious observance commemorates the story of Abraham & Ishmail as told in the Qur'an. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son as a proof of his faith. Before Abraham completed the sacrifice, God stopped him & provided a ram for sacrifice in place of Ishmail. The celebration commences with a congregational prayer & sermon, or khutba, at the mosque. This is followed by visiting friends & relatives, feasting, & other festive activities. Since Islamic holidays are based on the lunar calendar, the festival of Eid al-Adha may occur twice in the same year.

**Recognizing the Festival/Holiday:** Gift-giving is common during this 3-day festival, as is the sharing of sweets & desserts. Muslims do not drink alcoholic beverages. Greetings: Eid Mubarak & "Happy Eid".

<http://www.e-resaneh.com/English/Religions/EID%20UL-ADHA.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eid\\_al-Adha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eid_al-Adha)

<http://www.amaana.org/arch/ismail.htm>

🌐 **Shakyamuni Buddha Day.** Day Tibetan Buddhists meditate on the Buddha's teachings & strive to fulfill the Precepts. [http://mszendo.org/historical\\_buddha.htm](http://mszendo.org/historical_buddha.htm)

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## December 10

🌐 **[Thomas] H[opkins] Gallaudet (1787–1851): French.** Educator. An American teacher, Gallaudet

established the 1st school for the hearing impaired in the U.S. in 1817.

<http://deafness.about.com/cs/featurearticles/a/thomasgallaudet.htm>

**Emily Dickinson (1830-1886):**

**American.** Poet, considered one of the most original of English-speaking poets, only 10 of her nearly 2,000 poems were published in her lifetime.

<http://www.online-literature.com/dickinson>

<http://www.bartleby.com/113/>



**Jane Addams Day: Illinois.** Commemorates the contributions she made to Illinois.

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2006/12/prweb489011.htm>

**Constitution Day: Thailand.** Public holiday.

**Festival for the Souls of Dead Whales: Inuit Eskimos.**

**International Human Rights Day: United Nations.** On this day in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1st such statement of principle by an international body. The document, conceived as "a common standard of achievement for all peoples & all nations," sets forth the basic civil, economic, political, & social rights that should be guaranteed to every person.

<http://www.un.org/rights/>

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## December 11

**Fiorello LaGuardia (1882–1947): Italian American.** Political leader. Energetic, colorful, & incorruptible, LaGuardia was the 1<sup>st</sup> Italian American political figure of national importance. During his 3 terms as mayor of New York City (1934–1945), LaGuardia instituted political reforms & public works projects & achieved the adoption of a new city charter.

<http://www.fiorellolaguardia.lagcc.cuny.edu/laguardia/>

**Naguib Mahfouz (1911–2006): Egyptian.** Novelist, playwright, screenwriter. Widely regarded as the Arab world's foremost novelist & the only Arab writer to have received the Nobel Prize in Literature (1988), Naguib Mahfouz chronicled the development of modern Egypt over 5 decades in 33 novels, 13 short-story anthologies, dozens of screenplays, & several plays. The Swedish Academy of Letters hailed his work as "an Arabian narrative art that applies to all mankind." Mahfouz's masterpiece, *The Cairo Trilogy* (*Palace Walk*, *Palace of Desire*, *Sugar Street*), published in the 1950s, portrays 3 generations of an Egyptian family in Cairo from 1917 to just before the end of World War II, whose daily lives reflect the clash between tradition & modernity at a time when Egypt was engaged in a struggle for independence from British rule.

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## December 12

**Frank Sinatra (1915–1998): Italian American.** Singer, actor, entertainer. Frank Sinatra became the 1st modern popular superstar with a singing & acting career

that spanned more than 50 years. Although probably best known for his singing career, Sinatra made over 58 films & received an Academy nomination for best actor for "The Man with the Golden Arm" & won an Academy Award for best supporting actor for "From Here to Eternity." He invented the solo singing style that has become the model for most other singers since the 1940s. His single recordings & albums have become American musical classics. Sinatra was born in Hoboken, New Jersey, the only child of Sicilian immigrant Martin Sinatra & his wife Natalie Garavante.

**Joseph Hayne Rainey** of Georgetown, SC, was sworn into the US House of Representative on this date in 1870, becoming the 1<sup>st</sup> African-American to fill the seat & was there for 10 years.

**Composition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (1900): African American.** On this date the brothers James Weldon Johnson & James Rosamond Johnson completed the words & music to the hymn of pride & hope that became known as the "Negro National Anthem."

**Constitution Day: Russia.** The new Russian Constitution was adopted on this day in 1993 by referendum. The constitution grants sweeping powers to the president, making him the person to name the government while the parliament is restricted to participating in setting the national agenda & most importantly, passing the yearly budget. On 24 December 2004, Duma canceled day off for this holiday.

<http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/constit.html>

**Independence Day: Kenya.** Kenya, the last of Great Britain's dependencies in East Africa, became a sovereign republic in 1963.

**Día de la Virgen de Guadalupe/Fiesta de Guadalupe (Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe): Mexico (1531).** Celebrates the day that Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared on Tepeyac hill to the native Juan Diego Cuauhtlatatzin. It is not an official holiday. Feast day of the patron saint of Mexico. The shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe is Mexico's most sacred religious site. December 12 is the anniversary of the day on which Juan Diego, an Aztec peasant, is said to have seen a vision of the Virgin Mary, who ordered him to go & tell the Bishop of Mexico to build a church on that spot.

**Recognizing the Festival/Holiday:** In both Puerto Rican & Mexican communities, this is a day when people go to church for prayers honoring the Virgin. Often a procession is formed to the church & a fiesta is held in the evening, sometimes involving scenes created to depict *el milagro* (the miracle).

**Our Lady of Guadalupe (Feast day): Catholic Christian.**


**Agoueh r oyo (Feeding the sea): Haitian Vodou.** Dec 12, 13, & 14.

[http://www.mysticvoodoo.com/voodoo\\_holidays.htm](http://www.mysticvoodoo.com/voodoo_holidays.htm)


**Masa'il: Bahá'í.** The 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 15<sup>th</sup> Bahá'í month. The English Translation of Mas'il (Arabic) is questions. <http://www.bahai.org/>


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## December 13

 **Younghill Kang (1903–1972): Korean American.**

Writer. Kang came to the U.S. in 1921, 3 years before the passage of the law that would bar Koreans & Japanese for 28 years from settling in the U.S. He attended university classes & read widely in American literature, beginning to write in English in 1928. He published translations of Korean works, book reviews, a memoir, & 2 novels recounting the experiences of Korean immigrants, *The Grass Roof* and *East Goes West*. Though he achieved only modest recognition during his lifetime, he is now acknowledged as an important figure, perhaps the 1st writer to express the claim of Asian immigrants to be full participants in American society.

 **Doctors Elizabeth Blackwell, Emily Blackwell & Marie Elizabeth Zakrzewska**, incorporated the New York Infirmary for Women & Children on this date in 1853 "to provide for poor women the medical advice of competent physicians of their own sex."

 **The 1<sup>st</sup> coin with the likeness of an American woman**, was issued on this date in 1978. It was a portrait of Susan B. Anthony, founder of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

 **Lucia Dag (Santa Lucia Day): Sweden, Denmark.** This holiday, also celebrated in states such as Minnesota where there are many Scandinavian communities, honors an Italian martyr named Saint Lucia. Like many winter festivals, its central feature is lights. In Sweden, & Swedish-American homes in the Midwest, a young girl, one of the daughters of the family, dresses in a white gown & a crown of 7 lighted candles serves special buns & coffee. She & the other children then parade to their parents' bedroom or to the breakfast table carrying a tray of coffee & saffron buns called *lussekatter* for breakfast. In Scandinavia it symbolically opens the Christmas celebrations in bringing hope & light during the darkest months of the year.

### FOOD AND DRINK:

**Lussekatter** are made from a dough flavored with saffron & cardamom, & then made into S-shaped or other twists & decorated with raisins & pearl sugar. The same dough is sometimes shaped into a wreath. In Canada & the U.S., Scandinavian Americans celebrate Santa Lucia with parties featuring Scandinavian delicacies such as smoked & pickled fish, regional sausages, rye bread, marzipan confections, & butter cookies.

**COLORS:** White (the color of the candles & girl's dress) & yellow for the saffron bread.

[http://www.internet-at-](http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/holidays/nora.html)


[work.com/hos\\_mcgrane/holidays/nora.html](http://www.internet-at-work.com/hos_mcgrane/holidays/nora.html)


<http://www.scandinavica.com/culture/tradition/lucia.htm>

<http://www.twilightbridge.com/hobbies/festivals/christmas/lucia/>

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## December 14

 **Captain Sue Sophia Dauser**, superintendent of the U.S. Navy's Nurse Corps became the 1<sup>st</sup> Navy nurse to receive the Distinguished Service Medal on this date in 1945.

 **Amitabha Buddha Day: Buddhist.** Day Tibetan & Mahayana Buddhists do good deeds & chant the name of Buddha God Amitabha/Omito/Amida to gain entry to His Pure Land & aid in attaining nirvana.

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## December 15


 **Tatanka-Yatanka (Sitting Bull) (1830s–1890): American Indian (Sioux).** Spiritual & military leader. Sitting Bull fought & negotiated throughout his life to maintain his people's way of life & their right to their lands in the Black Hills. Leader of the army of Sioux & Cheyenne warriors who annihilated General George Custer's command at Little Bighorn in 1876, Sitting Bull continued to lead the resistance to displacement & assimilation even after most of his followers had capitulated. He was killed on this date while under arrest, in a confrontation between his followers & federal police officers.




<http://www.indigenouspeople.net/sittbull.htm>

<http://www.dickshovel.com/sittingbull.html>


<http://www.sittingbull.edu/Campaign/SittingBull.asp>

 **Bill of Rights Day: U.S.** Day they became part of the Constitution.

 **Navidades: Puerto Rico.** Marks the beginning of Christmas season & ends with Three Kings Day, JAN 6.  
<http://christmas-world.freesevers.com/puertorico.html>

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## December 16

 **Jane Austen (1775–1817): English.** Novelist, (*Emma*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*).


[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane\\_Austen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Austen)

 **Ludwig Von Beethoven (1770–1827): German.**


World-renowned orchestral composer/conductor, continued his work despite early hearing loss & eventual deafness (*Ode to Joy*, *The Fifth Symphony*).

<http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/cmp/beethoven.html>

<http://www.kingsbarn.freeseve.co.uk/introduction.html>

 **George Santayana (1863–1952): Spanish.** Philosopher, author.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/santayana/>

 **Reconciliation Day: South Africa.** Public holiday. Afrikaners traditionally celebrated this as the Day of the Vow, commemorating the day that a group of Voortrekkers defeated a Zulu army at the Battle of Blood River, while African National Congress activists commemorated it as the day in 1961 when the ANC started to arm its soldiers to overthrow apartheid. Now with the advent of democracy in South Africa, this day is

set aside to focus on overcoming the conflicts of the past and building a new nation.

🌐 **Bijôe Dibôsh (Victory Day): Bangladesh.** This marks the day in 1971 that Bangladesh won independence from Pakistan.

🌐 **Las Posadas: Mexico.** Celebrated from DEC 16 to DEC 24, this custom commemorates the trials of Mary & Joseph as they sought shelter (*posada*) before the birth of Jesus, & it initiates the Christmas season in Mexico. The holiday takes its name from the Spanish word *posadas*, meaning "a dwelling." A candlelight procession represents the star in heaven that guided the 3 wise men on their way. Children go from house to house seeking entry, until finally they are permitted to come indoors, where everyone sings, dances, & celebrates. After a religious ceremony on DEC 24, there is a traditional celebration centering on the *piñata*, a decorated clay container filled with toys & candy or a paper-covered animal shape suspended from the ceiling. A child is blindfolded, turned around a few times, & given a wooden stick & 3 chances to break the piñata. When the piñata is broken, the children scramble for the candy. **FOOD AND DRINK:**

*Tamales*, corn husks filled with savory stuffings, are popular at this & all Mexican festivities, as are savory turnovers & *sopapillas*—fried pastries dipped in syrup or honey & dusted with cinnamon.

[http://www.mexconnect.com/mex\\_christmas.html](http://www.mexconnect.com/mex_christmas.html)

[http://www.mexconnect.com/mex\\_feature/xmasindex.html](http://www.mexconnect.com/mex_feature/xmasindex.html)

[http://www3.kumc.edu/diversity/ethnic\\_relig/laspsds.html](http://www3.kumc.edu/diversity/ethnic_relig/laspsds.html)

🌐 **La Novena: Colombia.** Similar to Las Posadas where families pray & sing traditional carols for 9 days.

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### December 17

🌐 **Deborah Sampson (1760-1827): American.** In 1782, at the age of 22, joined the Continental Army's 4th Massachusetts Regiment & fought in the Revolutionary War disguised as a man called Robert Shurtleff. She suffered musket & sword wounds before illness with a fever exposed her sex & she was dismissed in 1783. Eventually she lectured around the country & was given a full military pension.

<http://www.distinguishedwomen.com/biographies/sampson.html>

🌐 **Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Acts (1943): United States.** On this date, as the U.S. fought side by side with China in World War II, Congress repealed the laws that had excluded Chinese from immigration to the U.S. since 1882. The new law also permitted Chinese immigrants to become naturalized citizens. The yearly quota was set at only 105 immigrants, however, & applicants for citizenship were required to document their legal entry into the U.S. & pass tests in English language, American history, & knowledge of the Constitution.

[http://www.cetel.org/1943\\_repeal.html](http://www.cetel.org/1943_repeal.html)

🌐 **Wright Brothers Day: USA.**

🌐 **Day the Clean Air Act was enacted (1963);** day to give thanks for the air we breathe.

🌐 **Feast of Orisha Babalu Aye: Yoruba/Santeria.** Healer of Deadly Diseases.

<http://www.rickross.com/reference/santeria/santeria2.html>

<http://www.palomayombe.net/orishas.html>

🌐 **Misa de Aguinaldo: Puerto Rico.** Is a Catholic Mass that is almost completely a song service. Aguinaldos are sung and the musical instruments used are the traditional cuatro (Puerto Rican guitar), guitars, güiros, and maracas. Misas de Aguinaldo are held for 9 consecutive days ending on the day before Christmas Eve. The mass is held at dawn (usually at 6am).

<http://www.elboricua.com/traditions.html>

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### December 18

🌐 **Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971): United States.** This act gave Inuit, Indian, & Aleut people title to 40 million acres of U.S. federal land that native people claimed had been taken from them by provisions in the Alaska Statehood Act. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act also provided close to \$1 billion to native villages and regional corporations.

<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/NPE/ancsa.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska\\_Native\\_Claims\\_Settlement\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska_Native_Claims_Settlement_Act)

<http://litsite.alaska.edu/uaa/aktraditions/ancsa.html>

🌐 **International Migrants Day: UN.**

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### December 19

🌐 **Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950): African American.** Historian. Dr. Woodson, for many years the lone voice in American Negro historiography, organized Associated Publishers in 1921 in order to produce textbooks & other material on African Americans. A year later, he retired from academic life in order to devote his full time to research as director of the Association for the Study of Negro Life & History & as editor of the *Journal of Negro History*. It was through Dr. Woodson's efforts that Negro History Week was established in 1926. It is now celebrated as African American or Black History Month.



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### December 20

🌐 **Sacagawea (?-1812): American Indian (Shoshone).** Guide & explorer. This day marks the anniversary of the death of the young Shoshone woman who joined the Lewis & Clark expedition at Fort Mandan (near present-day Bismarck, North Dakota) & accompanied the explorers on their journey through the newly purchased Louisiana Territory to the Pacific Coast. Sacagawea was the expedition's chief interpreter. The journey reunited her with her tribe, from whom she had been abducted several years earlier.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacagawea>

<http://womenshistory.about.com/od/sacagawea/a/sacagawea.htm>

<http://www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/inside/saca.html>

🌐 **Susanne Langer (1895-1985): American.**

Philosopher, her studies & writings deeply influenced psychology, philosophy & social science.

🌐 **J[oseph] M[arion] Hagggar Sr. (1892-1987) : Arab American.** Entrepreneur and businessman. A Lebanese immigrant, J. M. Hagggar founded Hagggar Clothing Company in Dallas, Texas in 1926, manufacturing slacks with 80 used sewing machines housed in a rented building. The company, which claims to have coined the term *slacks* in the 1940s, revolutionized the industry by introducing the assembly line into the manufacturing process. Today, the Hagggar Company has become one of the world's largest manufacturers of men's dress slacks, sports coats, and suits, as well as casual apparel for both men and women.

🌐 **Yule begins at sundown: Pagan & Wiccan.**

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## December 21

🌐 **Maria Cadilla de Martinez (1886-1951): Puerto Rican.** Educator, folklorist, writer, & activist. She made outstanding contributions to every field in which she worked. As a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, she inspired generations of students to study & preserve their cultural heritage. Her own research into Puerto Rican folklore & customs helped ensure the preservation of important aspects of the island's culture. Her writings included collections of folktales, retold in contemporary language, & volumes of her own poetry, as well as scholarly books & articles. She was also a pioneering feminist who worked ardently for women's causes, including the campaign for the right to vote.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa\\_Cadilla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mar%C3%ADa_Cadilla)

🌐 **Henrietta Szold (1860-1945): Jewish American.** Activist. Szold was the founder & 1<sup>st</sup> president of Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization that had been responsible for fostering improved health care in Palestine. She also cofounded the Jewish Publication Society of America.

🌐 **Heinrich Boll (1917-1985): German.** Novelist, winner 1972 Nobel Prize for Literature.

[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1972/boll-autobio.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1972/boll-autobio.html)

🌐 **Dōng Zhì (The Winter Solstice Festival ["The Extreme of Winter"]): China.** The shortest day of the year. Traditionally it is the time when fishermen & farmers collect food to prepare for winter. As with Lunar New Year, it is an important time of family reunions. On this day, people will wear new clothes, visit family, & eat & drink in celebration of new optimism. From this point, the days grow longer again. This festival is rooted in the Chinese philosophy of the Yin & Yang. On this day, Yin, representing cold & darkness, is at its zenith. However, this same night it will give way to Yang, which represents warmth & light.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter\\_Solstice\\_Festival](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter_Solstice_Festival)

🌐 **Hanukkah begins at sundown: Jewish.** An 8-day festival marked by the kindling of lights on a candle

stand called a menorah. *Hanukkah* is a Hebrew word meaning "dedication."

🌐 **Hopi & Zuni Soyala New Year Festival. 12/21/07 – 1/9/08.** Purification & renewal.

🌐 **St. Thomas' Day: Germany & Christian.** Celebrated on December 21, is also the day of the winter solstice, the year's longest night & shortest day. He is commemorated on this day because he was the last one of the apostles to become convinced of Jesus' resurrection -- he was the one who for the longest time remained in the "night of unbelief and doubt."

🌐 **Yule: Pagan & Wiccan.** Occurs on the Winter Solstice. It celebrates the rebirth of the Sun God, Yule, & the longer days which follow the solstice. Celebration of this holiday begins on its Eve at sundown.

🌐 **Tohji-Taisai: Shinto.** Rite honoring Sun Goddess Amaterasu. Storm God Susanoo angered Her, & She withdrew into a cave until enticed out with music & dance. The sun is of central importance in Japan & this day celebrates the end of the Yin period of the sun in its declining strength & the growing power of the Yang period.

🌐 **Winter Solstice.** Is the day when the distance between the Tropic of Capricorn & the sun is the shortest. Because of the earth's tilt, the Northern Hemisphere is leaning farther away from the sun than at any other time during the year. This makes the Winter Solstice the shortest day in the Northern Hemisphere where it marks the beginning of winter.

Because ancient cultures were unaware of the changes in the Earth's position, they feared that the sunlight would never return. To bring it back, they engaged in many celebrations & ceremonies. In fact, there are more ceremonies & "rituals associated with the winter solstice than any other time of year"

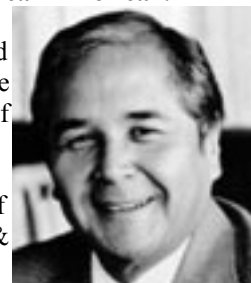
Hundreds of years ago, a Roman culture celebrated its major festival on the Winter Solstice. When Julius Caesar instituted a new calendar in Rome, the festival fell on December 25, a date that was retained for many years. About 1600 years ago, Pope Julius I chose this date for Christmas in order to replace the pagan tradition with a Christian one.

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## December 22

🌐 **Tomás Rivera (1935-1984): Mexican American.**

Writer & educator. The son of migrant farm workers, Rivera devoted most of his life to education, which he saw as the key to bettering the lives of Mexican Americans. He became a university teacher & then an administrator, holding a succession of posts at public universities in Texas & then at the University of California, Riverside, where he served as chancellor for the last 5 years of his life. He is best known, however, for his novel *. . . y no se tragó la tierra* (*. . . and the Earth Did Not Part*), based on his own



youthful experience. Published in 1971, it won widespread acclaim, signaling the emergence of Latino writers as a vital force in the literature of the U.S.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom%C3%A1s\\_Rivera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom%C3%A1s_Rivera)

**Hanukkah (hah-noo-kah) (12/21/08-12/29/08):**

**Jewish.** This holiday, often misunderstood as the “Jewish Christmas” since it occurs in December, commemorates the victory of the Jewish people, led by the Maccabee family, over the Syrian Greeks in 165 B.C.E. This victory marked the end of a 3-year period of religious persecution, restored Jewish independence, & ensured the survival of monotheism (belief in one God). According to legend, when the Jews returned to cleanse their Temple, which had been defiled by pagan worship, they discovered only enough consecrated oil to keep the holy lamp burning for one day. However, the oil miraculously lasted 8 days, the time needed to secure a new supply. Hanukkah is celebrated by lighting a candle on each of the 8 days of celebration. On the 1<sup>st</sup> night, one candle is lit in a branched candlestick called a *menorah*, & an additional candle is lit each night until the 8<sup>th</sup> night. This ceremony has given the holiday the additional name of “Festival of Lights.” Hanukkah is joyfully celebrated. Special Hebrew hymns, including “Rock of Ages,” are sung, family members exchange gifts, & children play with a *dreidel*, a 4-sided top inscribed with the Hebrew letters for “a great miracle happened there.” The holiday ends at sundown on December 12.



**Recognizing the Festival/Holiday:** A 4-sided top for spinning, called a *dreidel*, is popular for playing various Hanukkah games. Potato pancakes, called *latkes*, are a very popular food that can be found in many supermarkets or delicatessens.

#### **FOOD AND DRINK:**

Potato pancakes called *latkes*, sometimes served with applesauce, sometimes as a side dish with meat. The pancakes are cooked in oil, recalling the miraculous oil of the temple. Holeless doughnuts called *soofganiyot* are another oil-cooked specialty, especially popular in Israel. Hanukkah is a festive time for families & friends. Dishes vary greatly depending on local traditions & family preferences. <http://www.holidays.net/chanukah/>  
<http://people.howstuffworks.com/hanukkah.htm>  
<http://theholidayspot.com/hanukkah/>  
<http://www.joi.org/celebrate/hanuk/>  
<http://www.koshercooking.com/recipes/chanukah/soofganiyot.html>  
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/5493/hanuka.html>

#### **December 23**

**Joseph Smith (1805–1844): Mormon.** Joseph Smith was the founder & 1st president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormon Church). In 1830 he published the Book of Mormon, considered by members of the Church to be divine revelation.

**Sarah Breedlove Walker (1867–1919): African American.** Businesswoman & philanthropist. Madame C. J. Walker, as she preferred to be known, was an

entrepreneurial genius whose business, the manufacture & distribution of a line of hair products for African American women, became the largest enterprise owned by an African American in the U.S. & an important source of opportunity for African American women. Having invented the formula in 1905, she began by selling her products door-to-door. Her company eventually had 3,000 employees, many of them women who were licensed to sell her products through home visits to clients. Madame Walker used her personal wealth to support African American causes, funding scholarships for young women & giving generously to the anti-lynching campaign of the NAACP.

**Tennō tanjōbi (Emperor's Birthday): Japan.** This is a day of national festivities to honor the birthday of the current emperor. The emperor gives speeches throughout the day, & houses & buildings are decorated with the national flag.

**Victory Day: Egypt.** Public holiday. Celebrates the ending of the Suez Crisis.

**Noche de Rábanos (Night of the Radishes): Oaxaca, Mexico.** Is a festival celebrated in the city of Oaxaca every December 23, the day before Christmas Eve. Artists carve huge Mexican radishes into nativity scenes & pictures of Oaxacan life, & the city awards a prize to the best display.

<http://www.planeta.com/ecotavel/mexico/oaxaca/rabanos.html>  
<http://oaxaca-travel.com/guide/cultural.php?getdoc=true&lang=us&doc=home&section=cultural&atractivo=10.08.10.06>

#### **December 24**

**Eduardo “Lalo” Guerrero (1916–2005): Mexican American.** Songwriter. Known as the “Father of Chicano Music,” he created songs in both Spanish & English portraying the Mexican-American experience. Born in the Barrio Viejo of Tucson, Arizona, he learned to play the guitar from his mother, who was his only teacher. His versatile style of composition included boleros, rancheras, mambos, cha-cha, salsa, tejano, comic parodies, & children’s recordings. Guerrero wrote corridos (folk ballads) that told the story of Mexican-American heroes such as César Chávez & Ruben Salazar, and songs of social protest such as the humorous “No Chicanos on TV.” During his lifetime he wrote more than 700 songs, including *Canción Mexicana*, considered the unofficial Mexican national anthem. He was named a National Folk Treasure by the Smithsonian Institution in 1980 & received the Presidential Medal of the Arts in 1997. <http://markguerrero.net/8.php>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lalo\\_Guerrero](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lalo_Guerrero)

**Scott Joplin (1868–1917): African American.** Composer. Joplin was the leading composer of ragtime music. He is best known for his short “rags,” but he also composed a ragtime symphony, *Treemonisha*, & was working on a ragtime opera at the time of his death.

**December 24, Christmas Eve** [Argentina-Nochebuena, Austria-(Holy Evening) Heiliger Abend, Bulgaria-Badini vecher, Czech Republic-Štědrý den (In the Czech Republic Christmas is celebrated on Christmas Eve.), Denmark-Juleaftan (1<sup>st</sup> of 3 work holidays as the Danes celebrate 3 days of Christmas), Finland-Jouluaatto, Germany-1. Weihnachtstag, Slovakia-Štedrý deň, Sweden-Julafton, Venezuela-Nochebuena]: Christian. In many Roman Catholic countries, the meal on Christmas Eve is the most important of the Christmas season.



## FOOD AND DRINK

### Caribbean

In Grenada & other Caribbean islands, people eat fish served with a leafy vegetable called callaloo, & a variety of other vegetable dishes after attending church.

### Central and South American

In Chile, a rich stew with many sorts of fish & seafood is typical for Christmas Eve. Similarly, Venezuelans, Panamanians, & most people from Central America have a large meal late on Christmas Eve. In these countries, stews of beef & vegetables preceded by soups, perhaps of fish but equally likely made from avocados, squash, or other vegetables, are popular.

### French and French Canadian

In parts of France, it is usual to have a Christmas Eve meal that begins with oysters & includes other delicacies such as goose liver pâté. Among French Canadians, the meal is called the *reveillon*. After Midnight Mass, *tourtiere*, a pie filled with pork or a mixture of pork & beef, is served. Turkey & goose are also popular. In southern France, the meal known as *Le Gros Souper*, the Big Supper, concludes with 13 desserts. These are not necessarily cakes & pies in the American sense of desserts but nuts, candies, & both fresh & dried fruits, as well as baked goods. *Nougat*, a candy made from almonds, egg-whites, & honey is always included.

### Italian

Italians typically fast during the day, then have a meal of fish after Midnight Mass. At its most complex, this is a feast of 7 fishes cooked in 7 different ways, symbolizing the 7 sacraments. In northern Italy, this is often simplified by making fish stews with 7 sorts of fish. Although the Christmas Eve meal is large, northern Italians also eat a big celebratory meal on Christmas Day, often a beef roast.

### Germany

According to legend, on Christmas Eve in Germany rivers turn to wine, animals speak to each other, tree blossoms bear fruit, mountains open up to reveal precious gems, and church bells can be heard ringing from the bottom of the sea. The Christmas tree, as we

know it, originated in Germany. It has a mysterious magic for the young because they are not allowed to see it until Christmas Eve. While the children are occupied with another room (usually by Father) Mother brings out the Christmas tree and decorates it with apples, candy, nuts, cookies, cars, trains, angels, tinsel, family treasures and candles or lights. The presents are placed under the tree. Somewhere, close to the bright display are laid brilliantly decorated plates for each family member, loaded with fruits, nuts, marzipan, chocolate and biscuits. When all is ready a bell is rung as a signal for the children to enter this Christmas fantasy room. Carols are sung, sometimes sparklers are lit, the Christmas story is read and gifts are opened.

<http://www.californiamall.com/holidaytraditions/traditions-germany.htm>

**Nochebuena: Argentina & Venezuela.** The holiday usually begins at noon, so the morning is worked like a regular workday.

**Misa de Gallo: Puerto Rico.** Is a Misa de Aguinaldo held at midnight on Christmas Eve. It is a very solemn but festive mass often including carolers, children dressed as angels and nativity characters, & lots of candles. Many families attend this festive & beautiful mass as a tradition.

<http://www.elboricua.com/traditions.html>

**Wigilia: Poland.** Takes place on the eve of Christmas, celebrated with elaborate Polish dishes. The highlight of Christmas celebrations in Poland is Christmas Eve as the family watches for the first star of the night or *Gwiazdka* (little star), in remembrance of the Star of Bethlehem. When the first star appears in the sky, the Christmas tree is lit & the dinner begins. The Christmas Eve meal starts with a prayer, the sharing of the blessed *oplatek* (consecrated bread wafer which is similar to that used during Holy Communion in the Roman Catholic Church), & exchanging wishes. Usually, the male head of the household takes the wafer and turns to his wife, extending it toward her. He wishes her good health and success in the upcoming year, the fulfillment of her dreams, and, if there have been any misunderstandings, he asks her for forgiveness and for the new year to be a better one. The wife then thanks him and breaks off half of the wafer and eats a piece of it. Next, she offers the wafer to her husband, expressing similar wishes. He breaks the wafer and eats it. This ceremony is repeated with each person present, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest. After the breaking of the wafer and an the exchanging of wishes, everyone sits down at the dinner table. Families unite for the most carefully planned meal of the year, *Wigilia*, the Christmas supper which ends a 24-hour fast. The *Wigilia* derives its name from the Latin word *vigilare* which means to keep watch or keep vigil.

<http://www.polishcenter.org/Christmas/WIGILIA-ENG.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wigilia>

<http://csclub.uwaterloo.ca/~mawiebe/Wigilia.htm>

<http://christmas-world.freesevers.com/poland.html>

<http://acweb.colum.edu/users/agunkel/homepage/polxmas.html>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_wafer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_wafer)  
<http://www.polamjournal.com/Library/Holidays/xmasindex/xmas-oplat/xmas-oplat.html>  
<http://www.oplatki.com/>

🌐 **Procession of the Virgin: Taos Pueblo, NM.**

## December 25

🌐 **Wendell Chino (1923–1998): American Indian**

(Mescalero Apache). Indian spokesman & activist. Chino, who was president of his tribe for 34 years, was a key figure in the movement to demand that the federal government honor its treaties with Indian nations regarding the use of land & other natural resources. He was hailed by Roy Bernal, chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council, as "the Martin Luther King Jr. or Malcolm X of Indian Country."



When the Bureau of Indian Affairs' contracts for such activities as mining, lumber production, & water use began to expire in the 1960s, Chino refused to renew the contracts. Instead he formed companies to manage these resources that would be controlled by the Mescalero Apaches living in southern New Mexico. They built the Inn of the Mountain Gods, Casino Apache, a timber mill, Indian schools, a hospital, & a health center. Promoting "red capitalism," or Indian control of Indian land, Chino traveled widely as a spokesman for Indian issues & served as president of the National Congress of American Indians.

🌐 **Philip Vera Cruz (1904–1994): Filipino American.**

Labor leader and activist. Born in Illocus Sur in the Philippines & immigrating to the U.S. to work in the agricultural fields of California, Cruz served as vice president of the United Farm Workers union, working with its president, Cesar Chavez, to gain recognition of the union as the representative of the grape workers in California. With Chavez, he helped initiate the Delano Grape Strike that led to the formation of the union. In 1965, he joined the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee of the AFL-CIO & led the successful Filipino farm workers' strikes in Coachella & Delano. Later that year, he allied his movement with that of Chavez to form the United Farm Workers Union.

🌐 **Filippo Mazzei (1730–1810): Italian.** Adventurer & writer. An importer of Italian products, Mazzei came to America from London in 1773 at the invitation of Thomas Jefferson to set up an experimental farm where he planned to raise olives, grapes, & citrus fruit. He became a supporter of the cause of American independence & in 1779 was sent to Europe to borrow money for the revolutionary armies. He remained in Europe until the end of the Revolution, working in support of the American cause.

🌐 **Clara Barton (1821–1912), American.** Nurse, philanthropist, founder & president of the American Red Cross (1881).

🌐 **Qaid-I-Azam's Birthday: Pakistan.** Political leader. Qaid-I-Azam Muhammed Ali Jinnah was a leader of the movement for India's independence from Great Britain & founded the independent state of Pakistan. His birthday is celebrated as a national holiday on July 27.

🌐 **Christmas [Albania-Krishtlindje, Argentina-Día de Navidad, Austria-Christtag, Weihnachten, Bangladesh-Bôrodin, Belgium-in Dutch-Kerstmis (in Germany-Weihnacht), Brazil & Portugal-Natal, Bulgaria-Koleda, Canada & France- Noël, Czech Republic-1. svátek vánoční, Denmark- Juledag / 1. Juledag, Finland-Joulupäivä, Hungary-Karácsony, Indonesia-Hari Natal, Italy-Natale, Latvia-Ziemassvetki, Chile & Mexico & Spain-Navidad, Myanmar-Hkarissamat nei, The Netherlands-Kerstmis or Eerste Kerstdag, Norway-Første juledag, Philippines-Araw ng Pasko, Poland-pierwszy dzień Bożego Narodzenia, Romania- Crăciunul, Russian-Рождество, Singapore- Malay-Hari Krismas / Hari Natal & Tamil , Slovakia-Prvý sviatok vianočný, Slovenia-božič, South Korea-Romanized-Seongtanjeol (Hanja), Sweden-Juldagen, Switzerland-Weihnachtstag]: Christian.** Most Christians observe Christmas to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christmas has been celebrated on this day since the Roman Catholic Church established it in the 4<sup>th</sup> century as the official day for celebration. Some Eastern Orthodox Christians who follow the Orthodox New Calendar, such as the Greek and Cypriot Orthodox Churches, observe Christmas on this date. However, other Eastern Orthodox Christians & Coptic Orthodox Christians follow the Orthodox Old Calendar, or Julian calendar, & celebrate Christmas on January 7. The Armenian Apostolic Church observes Christmas on January 6. Christmas is a family-oriented holiday with special foods, colorful decorations, & exchanging of gifts. Families often have their own traditions, especially concerning when gifts are exchanged & what foods are served. Jehovah's Witnesses & members of the Church of Christ are among those who do not celebrate this holiday.

## FOOD AND DRINK:

Because of the great range of climates among Christian countries, the foods for Christmas vary greatly.

However, certain ingredients & types of food appear in many countries. Among these are the following:

### dried fruit

All European countries & countries where Europeans have settled use dried fruit extensively at Christmas in cookies, breads, puddings, pies, & simply for eating out of hand. See the recipe for *Figs in Red Wine*.

### spices

Christmas baked goods are typically spiced, sometimes with expensive spices such as cardamom or saffron. Cinnamon, cloves, ginger, allspice, & nutmeg are the most common spices for Christmas baking.

### baked goods

Every culture has some sort of baked good, usually a bread, pie, or cake, that is made only at Christmas. In

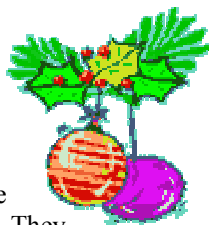
addition, cookies & candies of every type are given as gifts & served often at Christmas gatherings. See the recipe for **Gingerbread Cookies**.

#### **meat and poultry**

Christmas dinner or 1 of the other main Christmas meals always features a large piece of meat. National & regional customs generally determine the choice, which ranges from a large bird such as a turkey or goose to a large roast of beef, lamb, ham, or, occasionally, venison.

#### **nuts**

Because nuts are in season in late fall in the northern hemisphere, they are traditional at Christmas. They are often placed in large bowls so guests can help themselves. They also appear in many traditional cookies & cakes. Almonds are especially important in European baking. They are used in nougat, *turron*, marzipan, & almond paste. Hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans, & pine nuts are a vital ingredient in many breads & cookies.



#### **fruit**

Like nuts, fresh fruit is often placed in large bowls. Oranges & tangerines are particularly important in Europe, the idea is to display the showiest fruit.

#### **fish**

In some cultures, fish is important on Christmas Eve & fish luxuries such as oysters or smoked salmon are common adjuncts to Christmas.

#### **luxuries**

Whatever is rare and luxurious is appropriate for Christmas. In many poorer countries, this may simply be meat that is too expensive to buy at other times. In wealthier nations, fine wines, liqueurs, cheeses, chocolates, & exotic game birds are all once-a-year treats reserved for Christmas.

**Virtually all cultures have some foods that are essential for Christmas. For example:**

#### **Australian, British, Canadian, Irish, & South African**

Roast turkey or goose, rarely roast beef, is the centerpiece of the Christmas meal, with stuffing, small sausages, Brussels sprouts, & bread sauce as common side dishes. **Christmas pudding**, occasionally called plum pudding, follows, with either brandy butter or a custard sauce. Mincemeat pies are also served. Smoked salmon before dinner & Stilton cheeses after the pudding are special treats. All alcoholic drinks are popular; however, port & sherry are traditional choices, often brought as gifts.

#### **French and French Canadian**

Goose liver pâté or oysters are a special treat, with turkey or goose or lamb as the main dish of the Christmas meal. People from southern France have a tradition of serving desserts, including macaroons, cookies, & dried fruits. Many French & French Canadians use *bûche de Noël*, a rolled génoise cake decorated to look like a log with chocolate bark & meringue mushrooms, as the centerpiece of the dessert table.

Among French Canadians, roast lamb or venison is often served with pureed chestnuts as the centerpiece.

*Tourtiere*, a pork pie, is served at any time throughout the Christmas & New Year season. Plum pudding is popular although generally served with caramel sauce, not the hard sauce or custard typical of English-speaking countries.

#### **German**

Goose, hare, or venison are served for Christmas dinner. There are many cookies baked at home, including *pfeffernusse*, a spicy molasses cookie, & *spritz*, a butter & sugar cookie. Marzipan molded into seasonal shapes or as part of a cake or cookie is typical. The tradition of making gingerbread houses comes from Germany, & bakers there excel in making very elaborate ones, often turning their shop windows into gingerbread villages.

#### **Icelandic**

Smoked lamb is the traditional Christmas meat in Iceland. On St Thorlak's Day, December 23 skate cooked in the broth from the lamb is the traditional meal, often cooked by the men of the household. Another Christmas specialty is a thin bread called "snowflake bread" in English because of the elaborate patterns on its surface.

#### **Italian**

Christmas foods vary from region to region in Italy, but 2 baked specialties from northern Italy are now also popular in America—*panettone*, a raisin bread baked in a tall pan that gives it a characteristic shape, & *panforte di Siena*, a mixture of nuts, dried fruit, spices, & honey baked into a round disc, about ½-inch thick.

#### **Jamaican and other Caribbean**

Jamaicans eat goat or chicken at Christmas. (See recipe for **Jerk Chicken**.) They also have several British dishes, including Christmas pudding & fruitcakes. Throughout the Christmas season Jamaicans drink sorrel, a punch made with rum & an infusion of the sepals of a species of hibiscus. This is popular also in Trinidad & Guyana & some other Caribbean islands.

#### **Latin American**

In Latin America, the meat for Christmas is often beef (in Argentina, Chile, or Uruguay) or pork (in Central American countries). Turkeys & pigeons are popular in Peru & some other places. In Mexico & Central America, *tamales* are made for Christmas, as at other festive times.

#### **Scandinavian**

Butter cookies are popular for Christmas, as are cookies flavored with cardamom or ginger, or sweetened with currants, raisins, or prunes. Some form of rice pudding is also popular, often spiced & containing a charm or coin that will bring good fortune to the person who finds it. Many small fish dishes are served as 1<sup>st</sup> courses or snacks, including dishes of pickled herring, fish roe, sardines, & smoked fish. Carrots & red cabbage are both popular, while in Finland a rutabaga casserole is a



standard side dish. Norwegians serve the Christmas meal as a buffet & include specialties such as jellied pigs' feet, reindeer meat, fish balls, & a preserved fish called lutefisk. In Sweden & Finland, a whole ham is served for Christmas dinner. Many of these Scandinavian foods are also popular in Minnesota & other midwestern states where Scandinavian immigrants have settled.

Hot *spiced wine* warms Christmas guests in Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland & other northern countries. The tradition dates from medieval times, when wine was sold extremely young & needed help from sugar & spices to make it palatable.

#### **Spanish**

Nougat & turrón, made from almonds & honey are essential for Christmas in Spain & Puerto Rico. Spain also has many other almond confections including marzipan shaped into shells, fish or religious symbols, & cookies such as *polverones*.

#### **COLORS:**

Red & green (reminiscent of holly) &, to a lesser extent, white are associated with Christmas. Gold & silver typifying luxury are also important.

<http://www.the-north-pole.com/around/index.htm>

<http://www.santas.net/aroundtheworld.htm>

<http://www.theholidayspot.com/christmas/>

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/christmas.htm>

<http://www.merry-christmas.com/>

<http://www.santas.net/recipes.htm>

<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=76>

<http://www.holidays.net/christmas/>

<http://www.history.com/minisites/christmas>

🕯️**Feast of the Nativity: Orthodox Christian.**

🕯️**Bath of Christmas: Haitian Vodou.** Leaf-rubbing for medical treatments & talismans for magic protection, ritual sacrifices of pigs & goats, boucans for amusement, to which the loa come to bathe themselves and their proteges; sacrifice of turkeys for Caplau.

🕯️**Deer or Matachines Dance: Taos Pueblo, NM.**

<http://taospueblo.com/calendar.php>

#### **December 26**

🕯️**Laurent Clerc (1785-1869): French-American.** 1<sup>st</sup> deaf teacher in the United States, co-founder with Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet of the American School for the Deaf (1817).

🕯️**Boxing Day: Britain (Observed in Bahamas, Canada-lendemain de Noël, England, Hungary-Karácsony másnapja, Ireland, North Australia, Scotland, Sweden-Annandag jul).** Britain & many British Commonwealth countries including Canada & Australia observe the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Christmas as Boxing Day. When it falls on the weekend, the following Monday is a public holiday. The name comes from the old tradition, no longer observed, of keeping Christmas Day as a religious day, & giving Christmas boxes - presents - on the following day. Traditionally, Boxing Day was the time when Christmas "boxes" (presents) were given, especially to servants, who were also given

time off work. Today, Boxing Day is simply the second day of Christmas, & like Christmas itself, is spent relaxing & visiting family. All businesses & nonessential public offices are closed.

#### **FOOD AND DRINK**

#### **British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, Trinidadian, Jamaican**

The food eaten on this day is the same as that for Christmas Day. Sometimes people make a 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas dinner on Boxing Day if they are entertaining a different group of people. In other cases, they may make a relaxed meal using some of the many Christmas foods.

🕯️**Kwanzaa: African American.** Celebrated from December 26 to

January 1, it began in the U.S.

in 1966 by

Maulana

Karenga as a way

for Black

Americans to

celebrate their

heritage & is patterned after an East African harvest

festival. The word *kwanzaa* means "first fruits" in

Swahili. There are 7 principles of Kwanzaa, & each day of the holiday a candle is lit to celebrate one of them.

The principles are *Umoja*, which means unity,

*Kujichagukia*—self-determination, *Ujima*—collective

work & responsibility, *Ujaama*—cooperative economics,

*Nia*—purpose, *Kuumba*—creativity, & *Imani*—faith.

Gifts are sometimes given at Kwanzaa. On the

penultimate day of Kwanzaa, December 31, there is a

feast, the Kwanzaa Kuramu, which is celebrated not only with large amounts of food but also with speeches & music designed to focus everyone on ancestors & black culture.

Symbols of Kwanzaa are set upon a low table laden with tropical fruits & vegetables. Kwanzaa decorations

traditionally use a color scheme of red, black, & green:

black to represent the faces of Black people & their collective beauty, red to represent the struggle & the

blood of ancestors, & green to signify youth & renewed

life. The Kwanzaa observance includes storytelling about

the 7 principles of Kwanzaa: Umoja (Unity),

Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective

Work & Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative

Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), &

Imani (Faith).

#### **FOOD AND DRINK**

While there is no special dish for Kwanzaa, Black

Americans feature dishes that are special to their

community. These include dishes such as black-eyed

peas and rice, cornmeal mush, barbecued ribs, fried

chicken, jambalaya, peach pie, & coconut cake, which

are typical of the former slave-owning states in the

South. They also eat dishes from the Caribbean such as

red beans, rice, & *jerk chicken* or pork, as well as dishes featuring African foods—such as okra & peanuts that



slaves brought to America. (See recipe for *Curried Pumpkin-Peanut Soup & Southern Sweet Potato Pie*.)  
COLORS:

Red, green, & black, the colors of the Kwanzaa candles, are also featured in other Kwanzaa decorations.

<http://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/>

<http://www.ymicc.org/kwanzaa.html>

<http://people.howstuffworks.com/kwanzaa.htm>

🌿 **Junanoo or Jonkonnu: Caribbean.** A dancing parade that combines ancient African rituals with a Mardi Gras style. It begins in the predawn hours & lasts until sunrise.

<http://www.bahamasgateway.com/junkanoo.htm>

🌿 **Day of Goodwill: South Africa.** Public holiday. The day after Christmas is set aside to continue the spirit of Christmas toward all the people of the country.

🌿 **2<sup>nd</sup> Day of Christmas: Bulgaria- Koleda, Denmark- 2. Juledag, Latvia-2.Ziemassvetki, The Netherlands- Tweede Kerstdag, Poland-drugi dzień Bożego Narodzenia, Slovakia-Druhý sviatok vianočný,**

🌿 **After Christmas Day: Cyprus.**

🌿 **2. svátek vánoční (The 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas Day/St. Stephen's Day): Czech Republic.**

🌿 **St. Stephen's Day: Roman Catholic.** Public holiday in Austria-Stefanitag, Germany-2. Weihnachtstag, Ireland, Italy-Santo Stefano, Denmark, Finland-2. Joulupäivä or Tapaninpäivä, Catalonia, Croatia, Switzerland-Stephanstag, Republika Srpska, Norway-Andre juledag & Romania.

🌿 **Lá Fhéile Stiofán or Lá an Dreoilín (St. Stephen's Day. AKA Wren's Day): Ireland.** The latter translates literally as another English name used, the Day of the Wren or Wren's Day. When used in this context, 'wren' is oftentimes pronounced 'ran'. This name alludes to several legends, including those found in Ireland linking episodes in the life of Jesus to the wren. In parts of Ireland persons carrying either an effigy of a wren, or an actual caged wren, travel from house to house playing music, singing & dancing. Depending on which region of the country, they are called Wrenboys, Mummers or Strawboys. A Mummer's Festival is held at this time every year in the village of New Inn, Co. Galway. St Stephen's Day is also a popular day for visiting family members. A popular rhyme, known to many Irish children & sung at each house visited by the mummers goes as follows:

*The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,  
On St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze,  
Up with the penny and down with the pan,  
Give us a penny to bury the wren.*

<http://www.dingle-peninsula.ie/wren.html>

<http://www.irishfestivals.net/saintstephensday.htm>

🌿 **Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathustra): Zoroastrian.** Zoroastrians worship by making offerings to a sacred fire.

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## December 27

🌿 **Louis Pasteur (1822-1895), French.** Chemist-bacteriologist, his experiments disproved the theory of

spontaneous generation, showing that life only comes from life, & developed the technique of pasteurization for food safety. He also discovered prophylactic inoculation against rabies.

🌿 **Proclamation of the socialistic constitution: North Korea.**

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## December 28

🌿 **Day the Endangered Species Act was enacted (1973);** day to mourn those creatures already extinct.

🌿 **Day the 1st woman was ordained a Catholic priest** (without Vatican authority) (1970). Mthr. Ludmila Javorova was ordained by Catholic Bishop Felix Maria Davidek in Czechoslovakia. Her ordination is not recognized by the Vatican.

🌿 **Day an Islamic court ruled female genital mutilation to be un-Islamic and banned the practice (1997).** The State Council, Egypt's highest administrative court, also ruled that FGM is illegal unless medically necessary.

🌿 **Día de los Santos Inocentes (Holy Innocents' Day): Mexico, Morocco.** In an attempt to find the infant Jesus & kill him, King Herod ordered the killing of children in Bethlehem. Current research indicates that between 6 & 20 children were killed.

🌿 **Feast of the Holy Family: Catholic Christian.**

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## December 29

🌿 **Wounded Knee Massacre (1890).**

This date is the anniversary of the massacre of the Lakota Sioux in South Dakota. 150 mostly unarmed Indians were killed when the 7th Cavalry (Custer's old command) discharges



artillery amidst women, children, & fleeing men (where the Indians had made camp after surrendering). 150 Lakota remained unaccounted for. Most sources believe that these fled the troops, & the majority number subsequently died of wounds & exposure. 29 soldiers die in this final major military battle in genocide against Native Americans. 18 soldiers received Congressional Medals of Honor for their 'bravery'. The event marked the end of the Indian Wars on the Great Plains.

<http://www.woundedkneemuseum.org/index.htm>

<http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/acs/1890s/woundedknee/WKIntro.html>

<http://www.woundedknee.net/>

<http://www.lastoftheindependents.com/wounded.htm>

[http://www.hanksville.org/daniel/lakota/Wounded\\_Knee.html](http://www.hanksville.org/daniel/lakota/Wounded_Knee.html)

<http://www.dickshovel.com/WKmassacre.html>

🌿 **Al Hijrah (New Year): Islamic.** This begins the new year 1430 based on the Islamic lunar calendar. In 2008, the Islamic New Year occurs twice.

**Recognizing the Festival/Holiday:** Any sweet dessert is an appropriate gift. Muslims do not drink alcoholic beverages.

<http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/muslim/muharram-new-year>

### December 30

🌐 **Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936): English.** Poet, novelist (*The Jungle Book*), short story writer, Nobel Prize laureate.

🌐 **Araw ng Kabayanihan ni Dr. Jose Rizal (Rizal Day): Philippines.** This public holiday celebrated on the anniversary of his death, honors José Rizal the son of a wealthy Chinese-Filipino sugar planter, who studied medicine & liberal arts at the University of Madrid, becoming a leader of a small group of Filipino students studying in Spain. While in Spain, he wrote novels promoting social & religious reform in the Philippines & protesting the strong influence of the Franciscan, Augustinian, & Dominican Catholic orders over the Filipino people, as well as that of the Spanish government & Spanish culture. Returning to the Philippines in 1892, he founded the nonviolent reform society La Liga Filipina, but was deported to an island south of the Philippines. He was arrested in 1896 by the military on the charge of leading a revolt against Spain, tried for sedition, and publicly executed by a firing squad. On the eve of his execution, he wrote *Mi Ultimo Adios (My Last Farewell)*, a masterpiece of 19th-century Spanish verse. He is considered by many as the 1<sup>st</sup> Asian nationalist. <http://www.joserizal.ph/bg01.html>

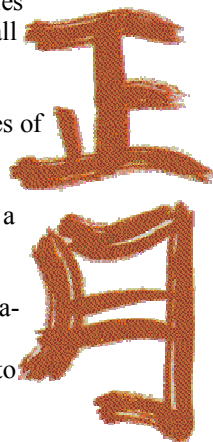
### December 31

🌐 **Hogmanay Day: Scotland.** Celebrated on New Year's Eve, every year, usually in a most exuberant fashion in Scotland as hundreds of thousands of revellers take to the streets to see in the New Year. In the cities of Glasgow & Edinburgh it has become a huge ticketed festival. Celebrations start in the early evening & reach a crescendo by midnight. Minutes before the start of new year, a lone piper plays, then the bells of Big Ben chime at the turn of midnight, lots of kissing, & everyone sings Auld Lang Syne. Elsewhere in Scotland, particularly in more remote parts, customary "first footing" & Scottish dances, or ceilidhs (pronounced "kayli"), take place. For centuries, fire ceremonies -- torch light processions, fireball swinging & lighting of New Year fires -- played an important part in the Hogmanay celebrations; as they still do today. <http://www.hogmanay.net/>

<http://www.rampantscotland.com/know/blknow12.htm>

🌐 **Omisoka: Japan.** It is the day of New Year's Eve. Since the New Year is the biggest event in Japan, people celebrate the Eve as well. *Omisoka* is a time of cleansing body, environment, & spirit in order to start a fresh new year. People work very hard to prepare for the New Year & spend 1-2 weeks doing things such as cleaning (like spring cleaning in here) & shopping. The reason people do the cleaning in the middle of winter is to get

rid of the dirt of the passing year & to welcome the New Year with a fresh & serene mind. And on Omisoka, with preparing the New Year's special dishes called Osechi-ryori, people finish up all the work of the year. People eat Toshikoshi-soba at night & stay up till midnight to listen to the 108 chimes of a nearby temple bell. Toshikoshi-soba is a bowl of hot brown noodles in broth. The noodle is a homophone for a word that means "being close" & therefore signifies the approach of the New Year. The 108 chimes called Joya-no-kane, rings & the old year & rings in the New Year. It is supposed to release people from the 108 worldly sins. Offices are usually closed from 12/28-1/3.



<http://home.att.ne.jp/wind/marcy/vicky/gallery/shogatsu/shogatsu.html>

[http://www.japaneselifestyle.com.au/culture/new\\_year.html](http://www.japaneselifestyle.com.au/culture/new_year.html)

<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2064.html>

🌐 **Watch Night: Christian.** Many Christians believe that the best way to welcome the new year is in prayer & worship. These services are for just that purpose. They start late on New Year's Eve, & continue into New Year's Day. During the service, the 5 minutes before midnight are dedicated to silent prayer. At midnight the silence is broken by singing hymns of praise. Often a potluck meal is held afterward. The 1<sup>st</sup> Watch Night service was held in 1770 at a Methodist church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Since then this tradition has spread to Christians of many denominations around the world.

🌐 **Gahambar Maidyarem (mid-year/winter feast): Zoroastrian.** Celebrates the creation of animals. It is also a time for the equitable sharing of food.

🌐 **Oharai/Grand Purification Festival: Shinto.** Rite exorcising evil from the world. Devotees are purified from offenses committed.

🌐 **Festival of Orisha Yemaya: Yoruba/Santeria.** Mother of the Sun & Moon.

🌐 **New Year's Eve: International.**

(Denmark-Nytårs aften, Hungary-Szilveszter, Japan-Ōmisoka, Latvia-Vecais Gads, Philippines-Medya Noche, Russian-Новый Год, Sweden-Nyårsafton, Venezuela-Nochevieja). It is the last day of the calendar year, or DEC 31 in the

Gregorian calendar. Since most of the world uses this calendar, New Year's Eve is celebrated around the globe. Celebrations on this night typically include going to parties or gathering in public



places. One of the most famous gatherings occurs at Times Square in New York City. At 11:59:00 p.m., a 6-foot shimmering ball (actually an apple) is lowered 70 feet in 60 seconds. When the apple reaches its destination at midnight, bells ring, confetti is tossed, & everyone shouts "Happy New Year!" This tradition began in 1907 after New York City outlawed firecrackers for New Year's Eve. The lowering of the ball is followed by the singing of *Auld Lang Syne* & drinking a toast to the new year.



## RECIPES

### Speculaas Koekjes (Dutch Spice Cookies)

These cookies are usually formed in cookie board molds, traditionally in the shape of St. Nicholas, they're often called "St. Nick" cookies.

- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups butter or hard margarine
- 3 ½–4+ cups flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tsp salt, scant
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¾ teaspoon cloves
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- ½ teaspoon ginger

Cream butter & sugar. Add remaining ingredients & mix, adding enough flour to form a very stiff dough. Press well-chilled dough into cookie boards (flour mold well, press dough in with fingers, level it off, then turn the board over & bang one on the counter so the cookie drops out). \* Place on cookie sheet & bake at 350° F. for 10 to 12 minutes. Store in sealed container to retain crispness.

\*To use with Rycraft Cookie Stamp: wipe stamp lightly with oil to help prevent sticking. Form dough into 1-inch balls, (roll in granulated sugar), place on ungreased cookie sheet, & stamp immediately. If design disappears, add more flour to dough. If dough begins to stick, brush particles from stamp & treat again with oil.

\*Or shape into cylinder of desired size & chill thoroughly in covered container. Slice & bake as above. Makes 6 dozen this way.

### Sprits (Dutch Letter Cookies)

Usually used to make initial letters for the Feast of St. Nicholas. The custom of giving an initial letter for Sinterklaas began in the 16th century. Before the 19th century, when chocolate processing changed, the letters were baked from bread or cookie dough.

- 1 cup butter
- 1 egg
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt

- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
  - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
  - 2 cups flour
  - 1 tablespoon baking powder
- Cream butter. Add egg, sugar, salt, lemon peel, & cinnamon. Mix flour with baking powder, slowly add to butter mixture. Place dough in a pastry bag with a tip that has one flat & one fluted side. Squeeze dough onto a buttered cookie sheet, shaping it into letters or initials of the names of the family or guests. Bake at 400° for 15–20 minutes, until lightly brown. Remove cookies from sheet at once.

### Luciapepparkak (Gingerbread Cookies)

Scandinavians usually bake cookies & bread to have with the "Lucia coffee".

- 1 cup cornsyrup
- 1 ½ cups light brown sugar
- 1 cup of butter or margarine
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ tbsp cloves
- 1 ½ tbsp ginger
- 4 - 5 cups flour
- 1 tbsp baking soda



Warm in a big pot on low heat: syrup, sugar & butter until the butter melts, not longer. Put it aside to cool. Then mix in the eggs, spices, baking soda & flour (keeping some flour aside for rolling out the dough). Let the dough rest overnight at room temperature & cover with plastic or wax paper. The next day: roll the dough (quite thin) & cut out the cookies using a cookie cutter. Bake in an oven at 350-375° F for 6 minutes. This recipe makes about 150 cookies.

### Lussekatter (Saffron Bread)

Saffron breads are festival breads in northern Europe. This dough makes the bread or buns common in southwestern England, or the *lussekatter* served on the morning of Santa Lucia in Scandinavia & Minnesota.

- ½ teaspoon saffron threads
- ½ cup golden raisins
- ¼ cup boiling water
- 2 packages active dry yeast
- ½ cup milk
- cup sugar
- 4 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon powdered cardamom
- ¼ pound butter at room temperature

Set the oven at 250°F. Put the saffron in a cup & the raisins on a plate & put them in the oven. After 5 minutes, remove the saffron & pour the boiling water over it. Let steep for 20 minutes (longer if you prefer) while you get on with the rest of the preparation. Turn off the oven but leave the dried fruit inside to stay warm. Mix the yeast with the milk and a teaspoon of the sugar & let stand for 10–15 minutes in a warm, but not hot, spot. Combine the flour, the remaining sugar, salt, &

cardamom in a large mixing bowl. Add the yeast mixture and then the butter. When everything is thoroughly combined, add the saffron mixture, which should now be a deep marigold color. Mix & then add the warm raisins. Knead thoroughly until the dough is soft but not sticky. Roll it into a ball & put it in a bowl; cover with plastic & let it rise in a draft-free spot until it has doubled in bulk. This takes about 2 hours.

Knock the dough down by thumping it firmly several times. Knead it for 2–3 minutes. *To make bread*, shape it to fit a 9-by-5-inch bread pan, cover, & let rise for another 30–45 minutes or until it is higher than the top of the pan. While it is rising, heat the oven to 375°F. Put the bread in the oven & bake for 30–35 minutes. Makes 1 loaf.

*To make buns*, form the dough into 16 balls. Place these on a greased cookie sheet, flatten the tops slightly with your palm, cover, & let rise for about 25 minutes or until doubled in bulk. Turn the oven to 375°F while they are rising. Bake them for 15 minutes or until the bottoms are browned & sound hollow when rapped. Makes 16 buns.

*To make lussekatter for Santa Lucia*, form the dough into 12 strips. Twist each strip into an S-shape. Stick a raisin into each half of the S or in the curve of whatever twist you make. Let them rise under a cloth or plastic cover for another 25–30 minutes; then bake at 375°F until the bottoms are browned & they sound hollow when rapped, about 15 minutes. You could also form the dough into a braided wreath shape, another popular form for Santa Lucia. Makes 1 loaf or 12 rolls.

## Potato Latkes

The oil used to cook these potato pancakes symbolizes the miraculous supply of oil in the temple when the Jews retook it from the Syrian Greeks in 165 b.c.e.

- 8 medium potatoes, grated
- 2 medium onions, grated
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- salt & pepper to taste
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- vegetable oil

Mix the grated potatoes & onions. Squeeze out excess liquid. Blend in the eggs, flour, salt & pepper, & baking powder. Heat the vegetable oil until very hot & then drop mixture in large dollops from a serving spoon. Flatten pancakes with the back of the spoon or a spatula & fry, turning once until both sides are golden brown. Makes about 10 latkes.

## Soofganiyot (Hanukkah doughnuts)

- Oil for frying
- ¼ cup warm water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 packages dry yeast
- ½ cup orange juice
- ¼ pound butter
- 5 tablespoons sugar

dash salt

2 eggs lightly beaten

3 cups all-purpose flour

In a heavy pot, heat oil to 350–375 degrees. Combine sugar with water & add yeast. To proof yeast, put in a warm, moist place or put a pot of boiling water in an enclosed space such as the oven or clean, empty dishwasher. While yeast proofs, heat orange juice, butter, sugar & salt in a small pan. When lukewarm, pour into bowl & add beaten eggs & proofed yeast. Stir to mix. Add flour & make into a pliable dough. Knead on floured board or in bowl. Grease bowl & allow dough to rise in a warm, moist place for about a half hour. Punch down. Cut dough in strips or into circles. Place on greased, floured cookie sheet at least one inch apart. Return to warm, moist place to rise. Allow to rise for 20 minutes. or longer. Fry in preheated deep fat until nicely browned on both sides. Drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with confectioners sugar or cinnamon & sugar mixture. These may also be served with honey or jam & may be reheated to restore freshness. Yield: 18 - 24.

## Baba Karpinska's Torte (Wigilia feast)

2 ½ c ground walnuts

2/3 c sugar

8 medium eggs (yolks and whites beaten separately)

pinch of salt

Beat egg whites. Mix nuts & egg yolks. Add sugar. Fold into beaten whites. Pour into greased 8 in pan. Bake at 350°F about 20 min. When cold cut in two (2 layers) & ice cake. Sprinkle ground nuts on top & sides.

### Icing:

½ lb butter

2 c icing sugar

4 raw yolks

2 glasses of rum (interpret as you like!) I don't like rum, so I leave it out.

2 spoonfuls of strong coffee.

## Perogi (Wigilia feast)

Dough:

1 ¼ cup milk

¼ cup oil

1 egg

2 cups flour (and then lots more)

1 tsp salt

Put egg & salt into a bowl & beat. Mix in milk and oil. Add flour until it becomes a sticky dough that you can roll out. Knead into a ball & set aside.

Filling:

3 potatoes

1 onion

1 cup grated cheese

salt & pepper



Dice & fry the onion. Peel & mash the potatoes, then add in the cheese & onion. Add salt & pepper with a heavy hand, as they leach during cooking.

Roll the dough out very thin. Use a cup or glass to cut into circles, then put a spoonful of filling into each circle. Fold over to create a semi-circle, then pinch closed (make sure that the dough is pinched well so that the perogi do not open during boiling). It is possible to freeze the perogi individually & cook them later. Put the perogi in a pot of boiling water. They will sink to the bottom- stir them gently so they don't stick. They are done when they rise to the top (the ones that open may not rise to the top, so you will need to fish them out).

### Reisbrei (Rice Porridge) (German)

½ converted rice

1 quart milk

Pinch of salt

4 tbs. sugar

1 tbl. butter

¼ cup raisins, optional

Cook rice in milk with salt and butter, very slowly until kernels are tender but have not lost their shape. If you have patience, do this in the top of a double broiler. It will take 1 ½ to 2 hours but will be worth it. The mixture should be very thick and can be stirred several times during cooking. When done, flavor with sugar, cinnamon and add raisins-if you are using them. This may be served hot or cold.

### Tamales

<http://www.gourmetsleuth.com/tamales.htm>

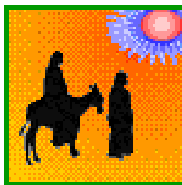
Mexican tamales (tamal is the Mexican "singular" use of the word) are packets of corn dough with a savory or sweet filling & typically wrapped in corn husks or banana leaves. The packets are steamed & eaten traditionally served with Atole (masa drink).

Contrary to what is found in most American-Mexican restaurants, most tamales are *not* served with a sauce, but rather simple & plain.

#### History

Tamales date back to pre-Colombian (before Columbus) Mexico & possibly even further. No history of the tamale would be complete without discussing the process of "nixtamalization". Nixtamalization is the processing of field corn with wood ashes (pre-Colombian) or now with "cal, slaked lime". This processing softens the corn for easier grinding & also aids in digestibility & increases the nutrients absorbed by the human body. Nixtamalization dates back to the southern coast of Guatemala around 1200 - 1500BC where kitchens were found equipped with the necessities of nixtamal making. We have found no specific references to the making of tamales at this time.

It is well documented by *Friar Bernardino de Shaagun* in the 1550's that the Spaniards were served tamales by the Aztecs during their 1<sup>st</sup> visits to Mexico. (America's



First Cuisine's - Sophie D. Coe). Tamales were made with beans, meats & chiles & cooked on the open fires as well as on comals.

#### Varieties

As with most Mexican foods each region of Mexico has it's own specialties. Specialty versions abound but here are examples of some of the variations listed by region.

■ **Culiacan, Sinaloa** - Everyday varieties include tamales made of small, sweet brown beans, pineapple & corn. Special occasion versions are large & made with both meat & vegetables.

■ **Veracruz** - Tamales made of fresh corn & pork seasoned with hoja santa. Other styles include banana-leaf wrapped masa with chicken & hoja santa.

■ **Oaxaca** - Large tamales wrapped in banana leaves spiced with their regional specialty "black mole". They also do a corn husk variety with other moles including green or yellow with small black beans & *chepil* (a herb).

■ **Monterrey** - This region prefers a small tamal that uses both smooth or coarse dough which includes shredded meat & red chilies.

■ **Yucatan** - Achiote is a favored seasoning. Many tamales from this region are quite large & cooked either in a pit or baked in the oven. The dough is made of smooth-ground masa & fillings include chicken & pork, or a combination. Another version is called the *vaporcitos*, a simple thin layer of masa on a banana leaf, steamed. *Tamales colads*, a thin dough with fillings of chicken, tomato & achiote.

■ **San Cristobal de las Casa, Chiapas** - A banana leaf wrapped version called tamales untados, filled with pork & a mole.

■ **Michoacan** - Specialties include *corundas* wrapped in fresh corn leaves & unfilled.

■ **North Western Mexico** - Both Diana Kennedy & Rick Bayless write of the huge 3 or 4 foot long tamales called *zacahuiles* made with very coarsely ground masa with flavorings of red chile, pork & wrapped in banana leaves. These monstrous tamales are baked in wood heated ovens in specialty restaurants, normally on weekends.

#### The Wrappers

The most common wrapper for a tamal is the dried corn husk. There are many other variations including fresh corn husks, fresh corn leaves, banana leaves (fresh or frozen) as well as the membrane from a type of agave plant. In other variations leafy Swiss chard or chaya leaves are used to hold the masa morsels.

#### Dried Corn Husks

Dried corn husks are the most commonly used tamal wrapper. Most of the corn husks found in the U.S. are smaller than the husks sold in Mexico. About 7 years ago a new "style" husk was introduced to the U.S. market. This style is called "enconchada" which refers to the "conch shell shape" of the stacked husks. The *enconchada* husks are of a higher quality & come in at least 3 sizes varying from 7" - 9". They are even available packed in water for immediate use. Normally

the husks must be weighted down in water and soaked for at least 10 minutes to make them pliable & ready for use.

#### **Fresh Corn Husks**

The fresh corn husks (not dried) are used in the Northern Veracruz to make *green corn tamales*. In Michoacan fresh corn tamales are produced called *tamales de elote*.

#### **Fresh Corn Leaves**

Diana Kennedy describes how fresh corn leaves are folded into "five-pointed sextahedron shapes" called *corrundas*. There is alternative, less complex method that produces a triangle shaped tamal. The fresh leaves actually impart an enhanced corn flavor.

#### **Banana Leaves**

Banana leaves are quite large & make very efficient wrappers for the larger style tamales. It is best to pick young fresh, tender leaves if you have a plant available. Otherwise they are available frozen in many Latin markets. To prepare you have to slice the leaf along the central rib, and remove the rib. The leaves must be heated & wilted over an open high flame to make them flexible. Once cooled, masa is placed on the "smooth" side of the leaf. Tamales are later boiled, or steamed.

#### **Chaya Leaves**

Chaya also know as *Jatropha aconitifolia* or *Cnidoscolus Chayamansa* is similar to spinach & even richer in iron. This plant was well known to the Mayan culture & is still available in some parts of Mexico. The leaves are used medicinally, as well as a cooked or raw vegetable. The raw leaves are also used as a tamal wrapper.

#### **Tamalon**

The tamalon is actually a large tamal that serves many people. You can use a simple smooth (not terry cloth) dish towel to wrap this giant tamale. Typical ingredients are masa with seasonings mixed with strips of swiss chard. The tamal is steamed then unwrapped, sliced like a jellyroll & served.

#### **The Dough**

Each style of tamal uses a very specific type of masa (corn dough). The best of the best comes from the Mexico City region where the tamales are white and spongy.

**Masa Refregada** - This style of masa is made of dried white corn, cal (slaked lime) & water. After the heating and soaking process the corn is drained, the skins removed (buy copious amounts of washing), then ground in a mill to a textured dough that is not as fine as what would be used for tortillas. This style makes a spongier tamal than masa flour but less so than the *Textured Corn Flour* version. [See recipe \(Nixtamal\)](#).

**Textured Corn Flour** - The process is similar to the masa refregada but the slaked corn or hominy (corn soaked in cal) is dried after the skins are removed. The dried corn is then ground to the texture of fine grits. This style masa produces very white, spongy tamales.

**Commercial Masa para Tamales** - Maseca makes a "instant" masa product made specifically for tamales. Tamale "aficionados" would probably have apoplexy at

the thought but for those of you who don't have access to fresh tamale dough, & don't choose to wade through the process, it is an alternative.

#### **Additions To The Dough**

**Fats** - Traditionally the fat of choice was fresh lard. This will vary with the recipe but some will use lard, some butter or vegetable shortening, or a combination of 2 or more of these. If you use lard, use only fresh lard & if possible, get freshly rendered pork lard from your butcher.

**Leavening** - Some of the dough recipes will use baking powder for a lighter tamal corn dough.

**Liquids** - The ground corn is most commonly mixed with water, chicken broth & even sometimes milk. The individual recipe will dictate the proper liquid.

**Flavorings** - Salt is almost always added to the dough to enhance the flavor of the corn.

#### **Fillings**

The filling for the tamal can be anything from squash or beans, to fish, chicken, beef, pork, pumpkin seeds, hard cooked eggs, even dove breast. Other more exotic ingredients are alligator tail or iguana.

#### **Wrapping and Tying**

There are many ways to wrap a tamale & again, the style will vary in different regions of Mexico. In fact, you don't always need to tie tamales. The purpose of tying is to make sure the tamal stays folded while it is steaming.

**Ties** - You can slice thin strips of soaked, softened corn husks to use for corn husk ties. You can also use household string. If you are using banana leaf wrappers, cut thin, lengths of banana leaves for ties.

**String** - (cañamo) Simple white kitchen string is commonly used for tying tamales. It's a good time saver when you don't want to take the time to make lots of small husk or leaf ties.

<http://www.cooking-italian-food.com/tamales.htm>

#### **Tamales Recipe**

Authentic Mexican Tamales

##### **Recipe Ingredients**

5 lbs. lean pork or beef, cooked & shredded

6 to 7 lbs. fresh masa

1 1/2 lbs lard

1 tbls. salt

1 1/2 pts. red chili sauce

1 bundle oujas (corn shucks)



##### **How to Make Tamales:**

To make tamales, cook meat by boiling in a large covered pot with enough water to cover completely. Add salt to taste & slow boil till completely done. Cool meat & save broth. When meat has cooled, shred & mix in the chili sauce. Clean oujas (corn shucks or outer husk) in warm water. (make masa by hand or with mixer) Mix the masa, lard, salt & enough broth to make a smooth paste. Beat till a small amount (1 tsp) will float in a cup of cool water.

Spread masa (1/8 to 1/4 inch thick layer, or to preference) on ouja, add a small amount of meat & roll up. Fold up ends of ouja & place (fold down) on a rack in a pan deep enough to steam. Add 1 to 2 inches water, cover with a tight fitting lid & steam about 1 1/2 hours. (a cloth can be used under the lid to make a tighter fit)

Many variations of ingredients can be used in making tamales. You can use a combination of beef and pork, use chicken or even fried beans. One or two olives may be added to the center or try adding a few raisins. This recipe will make 4 to 5 dozen Mexican tamales.

<http://www.recipecottage.com/mexican/sopapillas02.html>

### Sopapillas

2 cups flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1 level tsp. salt  
1 tsp. sugar  
1 tbsp. pure lard or shortening  
warm water  
oil for deep-fat frying  
honey

Mix flour with baking powder, salt & sugar. Cut lard (or shortening) into flour mixture. Add enough warm water to make a medium-soft dough similar to a pie crust. Put dough in a covered bowl & let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Then roll dough on floured board to 1/8 inch thickness. Cut into 3 inch triangles & fry in deep hot fat until sopaipillas are fluffy & golden brown. Remove from fat & drain on paper towels. Serve hot with honey. Makes 2 dozen.

### Buñuelos

#### Ingredients:

4 cups flour  
2 Tbsp. lard or shortening  
2 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1 1/2 cups lukewarm water

#### Directions:

1. Sift dry ingredients together.
2. Cut in lard, add water and knead until smooth. Let stand 20 minutes.
3. Divide the dough into 12 balls of uniform size.
4. Flatten each ball & stretch to a 5 inch diameter.
5. Deep fry at 425 degrees until golden.
6. Sprinkle with sugar & cinnamon

### Figs in Red Wine

Dried fruits appear in the Christmas cooking of all European countries. Usually they are included in breads or cookies. In this recipe they are cooked as a compote – a good alternative to the heavy desserts popular at Christmas. Use the dried figs that are sold in a ring or crown for this recipe

about 30 dried figs

1 1/2 cups red wine

1 2-inch cinnamon stick

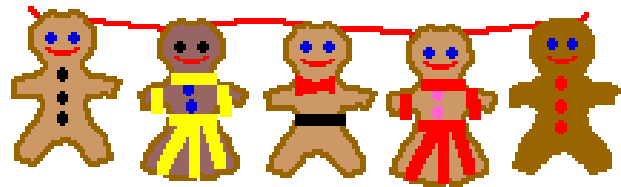
2 bay leaves

2 tablespoons sugar

Extra cinnamon sticks & bay leaves as garnish

Put all the ingredients except the extra cinnamon sticks & bay leaves for the garnish in a pan & add 1/2 cup water. Cover the pan & bring to simmering point.

Simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring once or twice, until the figs are plump & tender. Serve lukewarm, garnished with the extra cinnamon sticks & bay leaves. Serves 4-5.



### Gingerbread Cookies

The tradition of making gingerbread goes back to the early Middle Ages, & every European country has a traditional form with many variations in the spices. This dough must be chilled before rolling, but it is easy to work with. It makes crisp cookies that you can cut & decorate as Christmas trees or gingerbread people.

1/2 cup molasses

1 stick (4 ounces) butter at room temperature

1/2 cup dark brown sugar

2 cups flour

1 tablespoon ginger

1/4 teaspoon cloves

1/4 teaspoon white or black pepper

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

red & green frosting, raisins, silver dragees, sprinkles, crystallized cherries for decoration

Lightly grease a 1/2-cup measuring cup and pour the molasses into it. Cream the butter & sugar together until it is smooth and light. In another bowl, mix the flour with the ginger, cloves, pepper, cinnamon & baking soda. Mix about half into the butter mixture. Pour in & mix the molasses, then finally, mix in the remaining flour mixture. Shape the dough into 2 disks or rectangles, wrap each in plastic wrap & chill for 2 hours (or longer if more convenient).

When you want to bake the cookies, reheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cover 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper or foil. Dust a work surface & a rolling pin lightly with flour. Working with one piece of the dough at a time (& keeping the other one cool), roll it out until it is 1/4-inch thick. Cut out gingerbread people (or other shapes) & transfer onto the prepared pans. If you like you can use raisins or silver dragees for eyes & buttons, slices of crystallized cherry for mouths, or dust with oven-proof sprinkles. Bake for 10 minutes then transfer to a cooling rack.

If you want to tie the cookies on the tree, make a hole by wiggling a toothpick in them as soon as they come out of the oven. To frost the cookies, wait until they have cooled completely, then outline their shapes & make faces & buttons with red & green frosting. Makes 12-18 gingerbread people depending on the size of your cutter.

## Christmas Pudding

Like most English recipes, this is expressed in weights rather than in volume measures. If you haven't got a set of scales, simply estimate the packages of raisins, sugar, & so on. This is one of those recipes where getting a bit more or less of an ingredient doesn't really matter. Please note that this pudding must be made at least 6 weeks in advance.

- ½ pound seedless raisins
- ½ pound Valencia (very large) raisins
- ½ pound golden raisins
- ½ pound currants
- ½ pound flour with ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons of mixed spice (e.g., ½ teaspoon each cinnamon, ginger, and allspice, plus a heaping ¼ teaspoon of powdered cloves and a few grinds of black pepper)
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ pound blanched almonds, chopped
- ½ pound bread crumbs
- ½ pound dark brown sugar
- ½ pound butter
- ¼ pound mixed candied peel, finely chopped
- grated rinds, 1 orange & 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon almond essence
- 1 large apple, grated
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 4 eggs
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1 cup Guinness or dark beer

Wash the raisins & currants & dry thoroughly. Mix flour, spice, nutmeg, almonds, bread crumbs, sugar, butter, & peel together. Add the raisins, currants, rinds, almond essence, apple, & carrot, & stir well. Beat eggs & molasses together & stir into the mixture. Stir in the Guinness until the mixture has a soft consistency, i.e., it falls off the spoon easily when the spoon is tapped sharply against the side of the bowl. Put the mixture into well-greased basins, cover tightly with foil, & tie to seal. Steam for 6 hours. (To do this, stand the basins on a trivet or piece of wood in a large pan of water that comes ¾ of the way up the sides. Cover the pan & let the water simmer. As it evaporates, refill to the original level with more boiling water.) After steaming, leave the covers on. Store for at least 6 weeks & steam again for 2 hours before serving. Serves 8.

## Jerk Chicken

In Jamaica, where jerk-cooked food originated, the chicken is usually cooked on a barbecue fueled by the

aromatic wood from the allspice tree. This version can be grilled on a barbecue or broiled in an oven.

- 1 Scotch Bonnet (Habanero) or other hot pepper, seeded & chopped
- 8 scallions, trimmed & chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- ¼ cup vinegar
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce (optional)
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 tablespoon (or more) powdered allspice
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 6 large boneless chicken thighs

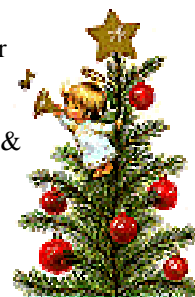
Put the pepper, scallions, garlic, vinegar, oil, soy sauce, thyme, allspice, cinnamon, brown sugar, & salt into a blender & whizz until they have formed a sauce. Place the chicken thighs in a dish & pour the sauce over them. Leave for at least an hour—longer is better—turning once or twice. Heat the broiler or a charcoal grill. Broil or grill the chicken pieces for 15–20 minutes or until done. Turn once or twice to cook each side. In Jamaica, pork is also cooked this way, as well as fish or sausage. The usual accompaniment is festival—a sort of fried dough. Rice with or without beans is also a good supper side dish. Serves 4–6.

## Spiced Wine

Hot spiced wine warms Christmas guests in Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland, & other northern countries. The tradition dates from medieval times, when wine was sold extremely young & needed help from sugar & spices to make it palatable.

- 1 bottle red wine, such as Merlot
- 1-3 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 cinnamon sticks (each about 3 in.)
- 8 cloves
- 8 black peppercorns
- piece of nutmeg, about the size of a pea
- juice of 1 orange
- 1 orange, washed & sliced
- 1 lemon, washed & sliced
- cup rum, brandy, or port (optional)

Put the wine, a tablespoon of sugar, the cinnamon sticks, cloves, peppercorns, & piece of nutmeg into a medium saucepan. (To get a chunk of nutmeg, just chop it off a whole nutmeg using a heavy knife.) Add the orange juice & place the pan inside a much larger pan or Dutch oven. Add enough hot water to the large pan so that it comes well up the sides of the smaller pan. Bring the water to a boil over high heat & then simmer for 15 minutes, stirring the wine occasionally & tasting to check its sweetness. Add the remaining sugar if you would like a sweeter brew. Do not let the wine simmer, but let it get very hot. Just before serving, add the rum, brandy, or



port. Ladle into glasses, making sure you have a spoon in each glass before you pour in the hot wine. Add orange & lemon slices. You can keep remaining wine hot by covering the pan & standing it in the bath of hot water. Serves 4-6. This recipe can be multiplied to make enough for a crowd.

## Polvorones

This Spanish pastry, also popular in Mexico, is all about dryness. Both the flour & nuts are toasted so *polvorones* fall easily into crumbs. The way to eat them is to squeeze them in your hand before you unwrap them. They're perfect with tea, coffee, or sweet wine. Lard is the traditional shortening, but this version cuts it with butter.

- 1/2 cup almonds, unskinned
- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- pinch salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 stick (3 ounces) butter
- 1/3 cup (2 1/2 ounces) lard or shortening
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- white tissue paper for wrapping

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread unskinned almonds on a pie plate & put the flour in a layer on a cookie sheet with a rim. Put both in the oven. Toast the almonds for 12–15 minutes or until aromatic & a shade darker. Toast the flour for about 25 minutes or until cream-colored. Stir twice during cooking. Let cool.

Sift the flour into a large bowl & stir in the salt, baking powder, sugar, & cinnamon. Process the almonds in a food processor until they look like very coarse crumbs. Mix thoroughly into the flour mixture. Make a well in the center. Cut the butter & lard into 1-inch pieces & put them in the well. Rub them into the other ingredients as if making pastry. When the mixture looks like bread crumbs, pull it together with your hands & wrap it in plastic wrap. Shape it into a disk & chill for an hour.

To proceed, preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a cookie sheet & sift a dusting of flour over it. On a cool surface, open the package of pastry. Keep it on the plastic & cover with another sheet of plastic. Roll it out to half an inch thick. Cut into 1 1/2 -inch disks with a cookie cutter or jar lid. Quickly reform the scraps into a ball & reroll. Place on a cookie sheet & bake for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven. Cool for about 5 minutes, then thickly sift confectioners' sugar all over them.

Cool completely without moving them. Cut 8-by-7-inch pieces of tissue. Carefully lift each polvorone onto a tissue, placing it a bit off center. Fold one side around it & then the other side over it, tucking it underneath & trying not to invert the polvorone, which will be tender. Twist the open ends of the paper so the polvorone looks like a large candy. Store in an airtight container. Don't forget to squeeze them slightly to compact them before unwrapping and eating them. Makes 18.

## Amaretti

*Traditionally served at Christmas time in Italy.*

- 2 egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup chopped blanched almonds
- 3/4 teaspoon almond extract

1. Add salt to egg whites & beat until frothy. 2. Add sugar gradually, beating until mixture is stiff but not dry. 3. Add almonds & almond extract & fold in gently. 4. Drop almond mixture on buttered & floured baking sheet by the teaspoon, shape into small mounds, leaving room between each mound. 5. Let stand 2 hours. 6. Bake at 190 degrees celcius for 12 minutes or until they are delicately brown in colour.

## Ghryba

*Egyptian Christmas dish.*

- 50g unsalted butter
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 teaspoons icing sugar
- 2 cups self raising flour
- icing sugar & pine nuts or silver ball to decorate

1. Beat butter until soft. 2. Add yolk, icing sugar & flour & mix together. 3. Make into thin biscuit shapes & put silver ball or pine nut on top. 4. Bake in pre-heated 300-350 degrees fahrenheit oven for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until pale golden colour. 5. When cool sprinkle with icing sugar.

## Curried Pumpkin-Peanut Soup

The peanuts in this soup originally came from Africa, so this is a good dish for Kwanzaa, when African Americans celebrate their heritage.

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large Granny Smith's, peeled & grated
- 3 teaspoons curry powder (or more to taste)
- 2 cups homemade or canned mashed pumpkin
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon salt (or more to taste)
- 1 teaspoon cayenne (or more to taste)
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped peanuts or cilantro for garnish

In a large pan, heat the oil. Add the onion, cover the pan, lower the heat, & let the onion gently cook for 3 minutes. Stir in the grated apple, cover the pan again, & cook for another 3 minutes. Stir in the curry powder, then the pumpkin.

Thoroughly mix in the peanut butter. Add 2 cups water, the salt, & cayenne. Cover the pan & simmer for 15 minutes.



Purée the soup in a blender or processor. Return it to the pan & add another cup of water. Reheat the soup & taste. Add more salt & cayenne if you like, & more water if you want a thinner soup. Serve in bowls with a sprinkling of peanuts or cilantro to garnish. Makes 5–6 servings.

### Southern Sweet Potato Pie

Sweet potato dishes are a specialty of the Southern states. This pie is typical for Thanksgiving as well as being appropriate for Kwanzaa.

- 8-9 inch shortcrust pie shell
- 1½ cups mashed sweet potatoes
- ¾ cup cream or milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 5 tablespoons melted butter
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ tsp powdered cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons bourbon or rum
- ½ cup pecan halves (optional)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a bowl, mix the sweet potato with the cream or milk, eggs, butter, brown sugar, nutmeg, cinnamon, & bourbon or rum. Pour the mixture into the pie shell & decorate the edge with the pecans if you are using them. Bake for about 40 minutes or until the filling is set. To test it, insert a warmed knife blade or skewer. If it comes out clean, the pie is ready. Serve warm—not hot—or at room temperature with whipped cream or ice cream.



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## How to say Merry Christmas & Happy New Year in:

Apache (Western) - Gozhqq Keshmish

Arabic - I'D Miilad Said ous Sana Saida

Armenian - Shenoraavor Nor Dari yev Soorp  
Janunt

Bengali - Shuvo Baro Din - Shuvo Nabo  
Barsho

Blackfoot - I'Taamomohkatoyiiksistsikomi

Bohemian/Czech - Prejeme Vam Vesele Vanoce  
a Stastny novy rok

Bulgarian - Chestita Koleda i Shtastliva Nova  
Godina

Cantonese - Seng Dan Fai Lok, Sang Nian Fai  
Lok

Cherokee - Danistayohihv & Aliheli'sdi Itse  
Udetiyvsadiv

Cheyenne - Hoesenestotse & Aa'e Emona'e

Choctaw - Yukpa, Nitak Hollo Chito

Cree - Mitho Makosi Kesikansi

Danish - Glædelig Jul og godt nytår

Dutch - Vrolijk Kerstfeest en een Gelukkig  
Nieuwjaar!

Egyptian - Colo sana wintom tiebeen

English - Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Farsi - Sal-e no mubarak

French - Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!

German - Froehliche Weihnachten und ein  
glückliches Neues Jahr!

Greek - Kala Christougenna Ki'eftihismenos O  
Kenourios Chronos

Hawaiian - Mele Kalikimaka & Hauoli Makahiki  
Hou

Hebrew - Mo'adim Lesimkha. Shanah Tova

Hindi Shubh Naya Baras

Hungarian - Kellemes karácsonyi ünnepek és  
Boldog újévet!

Indonesian - Selamat Hari Natal & Selamat  
Tahun Baru

Iraqi - Idah Saidan Wa Sanah Jadidah

Irish - Nollaig Shona Dhuit

Iroquois - Ojenyunyat Sungwiya deson  
homungradon nagwutut & Ojenyunyat osrasay

Italian - Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo

Japanese - Shinnen omedeto. Kurisumasu  
Omedeto

Korean - Sung Tan Chuk Ha

Lakota - Wanikiya tonpi wowiyuskin & Omaka  
teca oiyokipi

Latin - Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis

Latvian - Prieci'gus Ziemsve'tkus un Laimi'gu  
Jauno Gadu!+

Lebanese - Milad Saeed wa Sanaa Mubarakah

Maori - Kia orana e kia manuia rava i teia  
Kiritimeti e te Mataiti Ou

Maya/Yucateco - Utzul mank'inal

Norwegian/Nynorsk - Eg ynskjer hermed Dykk alle ein God Jul og Godt Nyttår

Ojibwe (Chippewa) - Niibaa' anami'egiizhigad & Aabita Biboon

Oneida - Wanto'wan amp; Hoyan

Polish - Wesolych Swiat i Szczesliwego Nowego Roku.

Portuguese - Boas Festas e um feliz Ano Novo

Romanian - Craciun fericit si un An Nou fericit!

Russian - Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva i s Novim Godom

Scots Gaelic - Nollaig chridheil agus Bladhna mhath ur!

Spanish - Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo

Swedish - God Jul och Gott Nytt År

Tahitian - Ia ora i te Noere e ia ora na i te matahiti 'api

Turkish - Noeliniz Ve Yeni Yiliniz Kutlu Olsun

Ukrainian - Veseloho Vam Rizdva i Shchastlyvoho Novoho Roku!

Vietnamese - Chuc Mung Giang Sinh - Chuc Mung Tan Nien

Welsh - Nadolig LLawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

Yiddish - Gute Vaynakhtn un a Gut Nay Yor

Zulu - Sinifesela Ukhisimusi Omuhle Nonyaka Omusha Onempumelelo

**JANUARY 2009**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

1<sup>st</sup> New Year's Day

6<sup>th</sup> Epiphany <http://www.cresourcei.org/cyepiph.html>

19th Martin Luther King's Birthday National Observance

<http://www.liunet.edu/cwis/cwp/library/mlking.htm>

26th Chinese New Year

<http://www.bigdates.com/holidays/chinesenewyear.asp>

#### Cultural Competency Advisory Committee

If your clinic or agency plans to host a celebration for the month's events, please advise Minette O'Bryan so that we may maintain a record. In addition, we will have information regarding your event broadcast to the entire department. For specific information on a given occasion please contact Minette O'Bryan 421-9260.

We are confident that many of you will take the opportunity to celebrate the month's cultural events.

Thank you.





**Care Packages & Troop Support:** <http://www.bellaonline.com/subjects/3651.asp>

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**Care 4 Troops:** provides convenient, unique and affordable care packages specially designed for hardworking U.S. military service personnel. <http://www.care4troops.com/>

**Creative Care Packages for Holidays & Special Occasions:** Great ideas for care packages to send to your deployed love one. <http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art27764.asp>



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<http://www.americasupportsyou.mil/AmericaSupportsYou/index.aspx>

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**Send Care Packages--America Supports You Homefront Groups, Multiple Links can be located at:**

[http://americasupportsyou.mil/AmericaSupportsYou/send\\_packages.html](http://americasupportsyou.mil/AmericaSupportsYou/send_packages.html)

**Give 2 The Troops:** This organization sends letters and care packages for free to our troops overseas.

<http://give2thetroops.org/>

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<http://www.goodygiftbox.com/military.html>

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<http://www.operationuplink.org/>



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**phone:** 1-800-901-1501

• **By Mail:** (with O.P.H. written in the memo)

USO World Headquarters; PO Box 96860;  
Washington, DC 20090-6860



**Operation USO Care Package:** Sponsor a Care Package for the Troops. The United Service Organizations, Inc. (USO) is enlisting support of individuals around the world to support the troops through Operation USO Care Package. These packages are being delivered to members of the U.S. Armed Forces deployed around the world to show them they have not been forgotten & to provide a 'touch of home'.

With a donation of \$25 you can sponsor a care package and include a personal message of support & encouragement. These USO Care Packages at minimum, include requested items such as pre-paid worldwide phone cards, sunscreen, travel size toiletries, disposable camera & a message from the donor thanking them for their service & sacrifice.

Corporations interested in becoming one of our National Sponsors or interested in conducting a corporate program, please contact us at [questions@usocarepackage.org](mailto:questions@usocarepackage.org), or call 571-261-1485. There are many different ways corporations may rally around our troops. We will help design one specifically for you.

**United Through Reading:** The USO, in partnership with Family Literacy Foundation, is proud to offer the United Through Reading® program at select USO centers worldwide. This program helps deployed service men & women stay connected to the children in their lives through the medium of reading aloud. This program allows service members visiting participating USO centers to videotape themselves reading a children's book. The DVD, a copy of the book, instructions, as well as information on the United Through Reading program, are mailed to the child & family back home. All recording equipment, books & packaging materials are supplied by the USO. To donate: <https://www.uso.org/donate/Default.aspx>

**Veterans and Families:** Sacramento, California-based organization is building support services for returning veterans. <http://www.veteransandfamilies.org/home.html>

**Wounded Warriors:** Donates everything from phone cards to TVs to wounded soldiers.  
<http://www.woundedwarriorhospitalfund.org/>

**Angela's** best tips on making the perfect care packages for your military loved one on deployment!  
<http://www.geocities.com/militarycarepackage/>

**Save Money When Sending Military Care Packages:**  
Learn some tips to help save money when sending military care packages overseas to your military family member.  
<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art31701.asp>

**Tips for Sending Care Packages Overseas:**  
<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art9072.asp>



## 2008 International and Military Mail Christmas Mailing Dates

To ensure delivery of holiday cards & packages by December 25 to military APO/FPO addresses overseas & to international addresses, we suggest that mail be entered by the recommended mailing dates listed below.  
[http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/localnews/mi/mi\\_2007\\_1004.htm](http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/localnews/mi/mi_2007_1004.htm)

Military Mail Addressed To	Express Mail® Military Service (EMMS) <sup>1/</sup>	First-Class Mail® Letters/Cards	Priority Mail®	Parcel Airlift Mail (PAL) <sup>2/</sup>	Space Avail. Mail (SAM) <sup>3/</sup>	Parcel Post®
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 090-092	Dec 18	Dec 11	Dec 11	Dec 4	Nov 28	Nov 13
APO/FPO AE ZIP 093	N/A	Dec 4	Dec 4	Dec 1	Nov 21	Nov 13
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 094-098	Dec 18	Dec 11	Dec 11	Dec 4	Nov 28	Nov 13
APO/FPO AA ZIPs 340	Dec 18	Dec 11	Dec 11	Dec 4	Nov 28	Nov 13
APO/FPO AP ZIPs 962-966	Dec 18	Dec 11	Dec 11	Dec 4	Nov 28	Nov 13

**OPERATION HELMET:** provides helmet upgrade kits free of charge to troops in Iraq & Afghanistan, as well as to those ordered to deploy in the near future. <http://www.operation-helmet.org/>

**Operation Homelink:** This non-profit provides free computers to parents or spouses of deployed military members to keep the communication flowing. <http://www.operationhomelink.org/>

**Military.com—Support the Troops:** Site has links to programs that offer aid to our military -- everything from care packages to emergency services to military family support.  
[http://www.military.com/Content/MoreContent1/?file=support\\_troops](http://www.military.com/Content/MoreContent1/?file=support_troops)



## Marine Toys for Tots Foundation

### Local Toys for Tots Campaign Offices:

Orange County, CA <http://www.octoysfortots.org/>  
Riverside, CA 951-655-3208 Riverside Reserve Center  
Pasadena, CA 626-398-0295 x1701 Pasadena Reserve Center  
Twentynine Palms, CA 760-830-7285  
<http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/tft/default.asp>

**Toy Drop off locations:** [http://www.toysfortots-socal.org/site/toydrop\\_locations.asp](http://www.toysfortots-socal.org/site/toydrop_locations.asp)  
Toyota Of Redlands 1139 W. Redlands Blvd Redlands, CA  
RCC Student Financial Services 4800 Magnolia Ave Riverside, CA  
Rancho Motor Company 15425 Dos Palmas Victorville, CA

### Quilts of Valor Foundation:

 Quilting Honor & Comfort for Our Wounded Soldiers.

The mission of the QOV Foundation is to cover ALL combat wounded & injured service members from the War on Terror whether physical or psychological wounds with wartime quilts called Quilts of Valor (QOVs). <http://www.qovf.org/>  
Contact Info: Barbara Winkler 562-925-7673 email: [creations4u7@aol.com](mailto:creations4u7@aol.com)



## LOCAL EVENTS

- **Nov 28, 2008 – Jan 4, 2009 Riverside Festival of Lights.** Downtown Riverside on Main St. Pedestrian Mall (Between University & Mission Inn Ave) <http://www.riversideca.gov/fol/>
- **Dec. 5, 6, & 7: 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Big Bear Loves Chocolate!** For more information call (909) 584-1066 or go to: [www.bigbearlakevba.com](http://www.bigbearlakevba.com)
- **Dec. 6: Christmas Winter Parade.** 5pm. Downtown Upland, 2nd Ave & 9th St. <http://www.ci.upland.ca.us/asp/Site/Living/Calendar/index.asp>
- **Dec. 21: Story of Hanukah. Lighting of the Menorah.** 2pm. Corner of Village Dr. and Pine Knot in the Village. 909-866-9556. [www.bnaibigbear.org](http://www.bnaibigbear.org)
- **Dec. 27: Hanukah Celebration.** Miller Park, Fawnskin. 6 - 9pm. Pot luck, games, bring the family. [www.bnaibigbear.org](http://www.bnaibigbear.org)

eid sa'eed =



= happy holiday



Happy



Holidays!

<http://www.teachersmousepad.com/Happy%20Holidays.htm>

